

this Issue: Frederick Palmer, Lucille Baldwin Van Slyke  
is Parker Butler, **NOVEMBER 1911** Mary Imlay Taylor  
Gene P. Lyle, George Hibbard, William Bullock and others

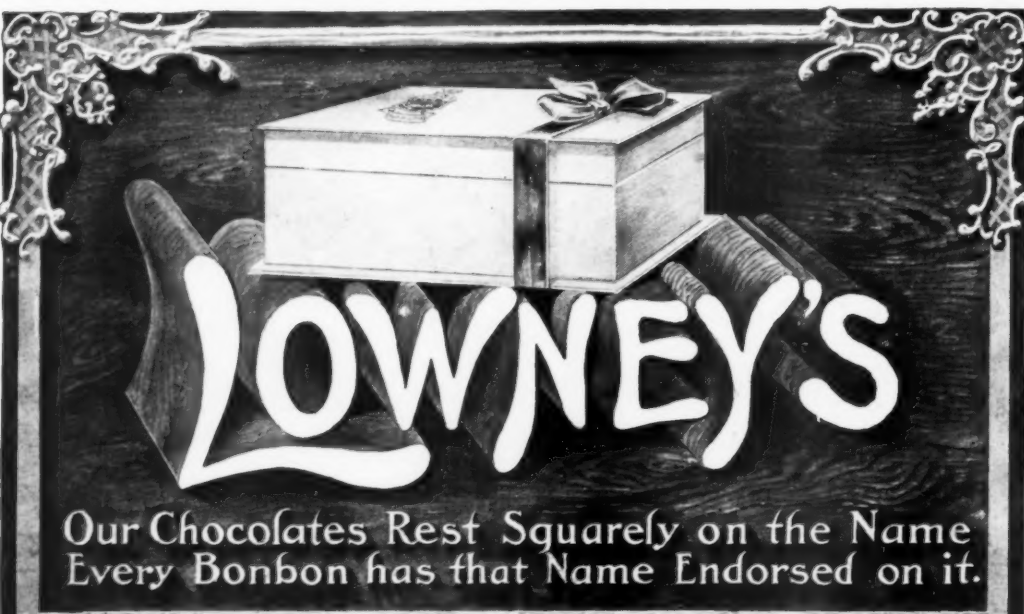
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# THE RED BOOK

## MAGAZINE

EDITED BY KARL EDWIN HARRIMAN

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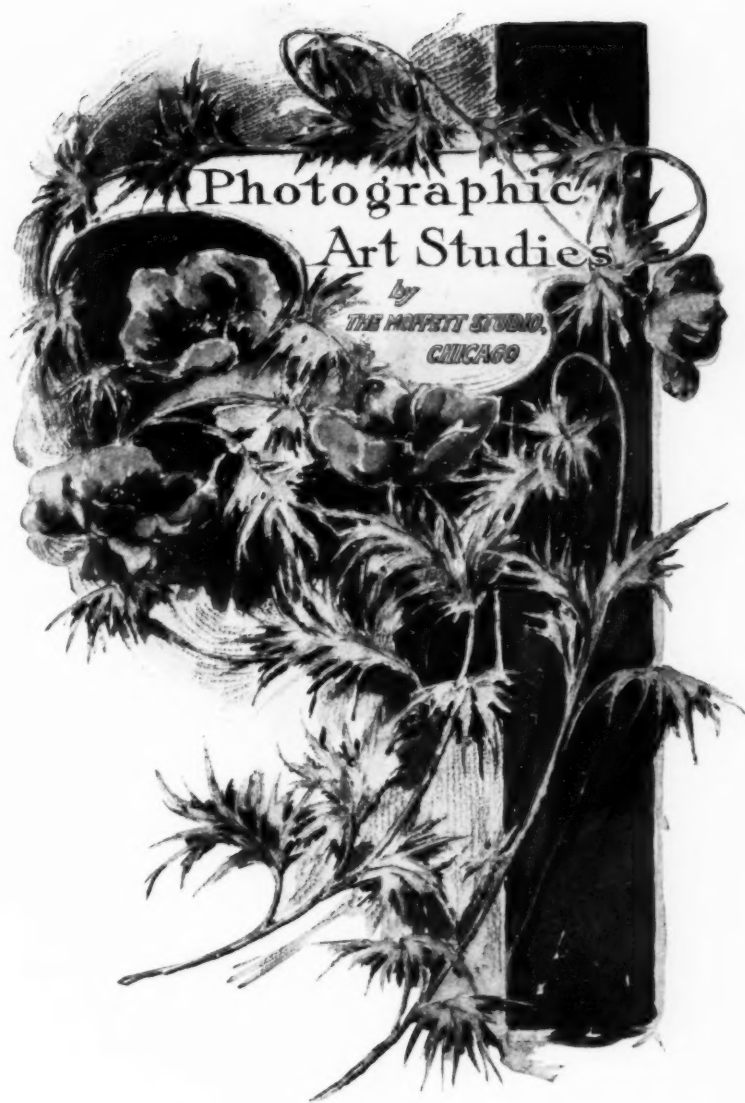


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leading lady with John Drew  
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MISS MABEL FRENYEAR  
in Vaudeville  
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who, with her husband Richard Bennett, re-  
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in "Dear Old Billy"  
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with Nat C. Goodwin in Vaudeville  
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in "Seven Sisters"  
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starring in "Gypsy Love"

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MISS HELENE LACKAYE  
sister of Wilton Lackaye appearing in  
"The Fox"

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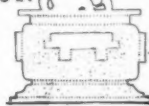
MISS ETHEL CADMAN  
in "The Arcadians"

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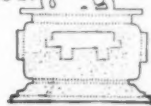


MISS EDNA HUNTER  
in "Little Miss Fix-it"  
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MISS BETTIE DEVENDORF  
in "The Girl I Love"

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MISS PAULINE L. NEFF  
in "The Grain of Dust"  
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in "The Girl I Love"

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MISS ALMA RUSSELL  
in "Rock of Ages"  
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With a gleeful shout he was overboard

To accompany "The Raft,"—page 134

# THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE

Vol. XVIII

November 1911

No. 1

## A Touch of Soldierly Madness

by  
Frederick Palmer

Author of "The Vagabond"; "The  
Ways of the Service"; etc.

Illustrated by Arthur Becher

WHEN Private Tom Galbraith first saw Marian Goodyear, she was a speck on the Mexican desert, while he paced the Arizona boundary line counting one-two-three through eleven, again and again. Yesterday it had been through twelve, and the day before through thirteen.

To-morrow the number would be only ten, and the day after, nine. He had begun counting with three times three hundred and sixty-five, almost immediately after he succumbed to an Impulse when he saw a recruiting-office sign in New York. At the time his pockets were empty, except for a telegram which had come in the midst of a financial crisis and of temperamental chaos. It announced the bankruptcy of his uncle as a reason for the permanent discontinuance of remittances.

Hitherto, he had been a spoiled child;

he had never been under discipline. With the Impulse he tied himself to three years of servitude by a solemn oath. A brief experience in the awkward squad left him thoughtful, between the choice of playing the game or deserting.

This turning point in an enlisted ne'er-do-well's career, as the Colonel or the Drill Sergeant will tell you, decides whether he has manhood at bottom or not. Tom chose to play the game. He became the model private of Company G, the winner of the sharpshooter's medal, and wore a quartermaster's issue of olive drab in a manner to give it the distinction of a cadet uniform.

"One-two-three—" eleven days more, and he was going out to battle in the civil world for things which youthful folly had lost. By way of capital for the enterprise he had accumulated \$175.60 in savings from his pay of "17 per."



It was hard saving, but highly educational. It was hard, bitter counting three times three hundred and sixty-five across the Pacific on a long Philippines tour and back to Arizona to keep watch that no insurrectos violated neutrality by bringing rifles into Mexico under hay.

"One-two—" When he came to the eleven he snapped it out merrily, with a personal fling which said: "I'll have done with you for good, old eleven, tomorrow! One-two—" he kept up his steady pace, observing that distant speck out of the tail of his eye.

It became a galloping horse. He identified the rider as a woman, then positively as an American woman. She rode well. She was young. She formed a picture of life and movement so good to see in that isolated community, beset with *mantillas* and steeple hats, that it made him stop counting.

"Before I was a private, I used to know girls of her world as equals," he thought.

From the angle of her approach he judged that she would pass behind his back. He judged this with a poignant regret; but it was not the business of perfectly correct sentries to halt unless they saw a suspicious load of hay or some one asked them a question. He must keep up a certain number of revolutions to the minute, as it were, to the end of his beat before he faced around.

However, a perfectly correct sentry is not to walk through a horse which comes to a standstill immediately in front of him; for Miss Goodyear had changed her direction and drawn rein right across the path of scrutinizing and discreet neutrality.

It seemed to him that he had never seen so glorious a creature. At least, he had never known one to rise out of a desert. More in the impulse of homage than in the expression of military punctiliousness, Private Galbraith came to attention, his rifle held in front of him in exact line with the buttons on his blouse, according to the pattern plates in the drill manual for young recruits to study. Moreover, the regulations require that a sentry should look fairly at the person addressing him.

Miss Marian Goodyear was all brown—brown riding-suit, cheeks brown from the open air and brown hair a little in disarray from the long ride that had covered her horse with a fine dust. He was gazing into brownish-black eyes under long, black lashes that quivered slightly, while out of the expanded pupils came a kind of laughing light.

Wouldn't this statue stop staring at her? she was asking herself. Yet, staring was not exactly the word to associate with such polite and official deference which was waiting to hear what she had to say. She looked toward the stars and stripes which floated over the custom-house and glanced back at him sidewise. Indeed, it was the relief of being once more on American soil that had made her stop to speak to the sentry who personified home authority.

"I never realized before how good the flag could look!" she said.

"Yes, ma'am!" answered Private Galbraith, officially, respectfully, as he would to the Colonel's wife.

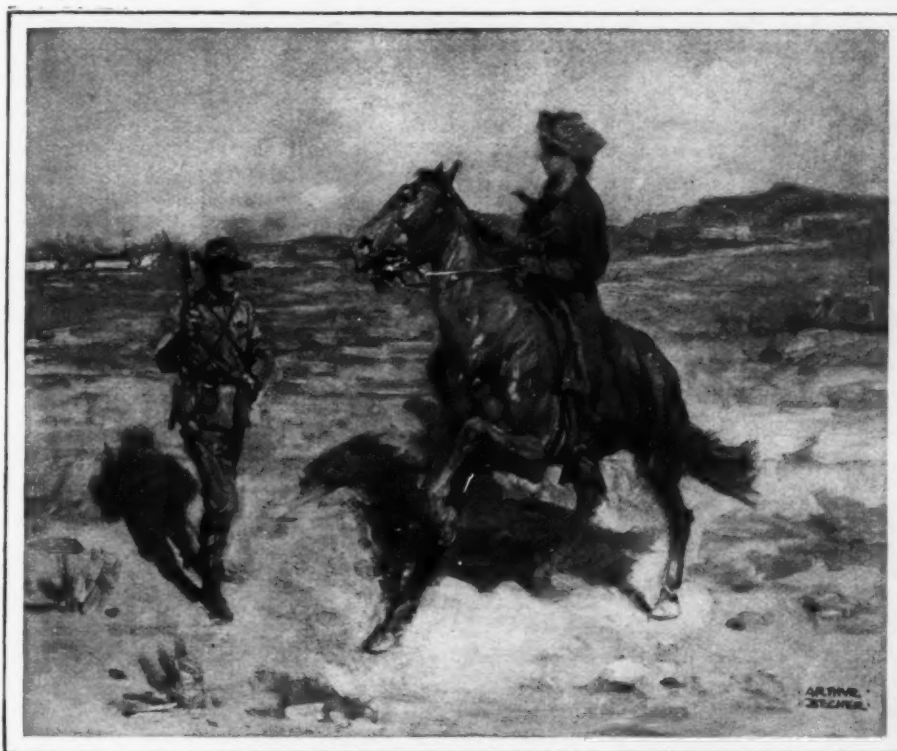
Her voice was soft and overwhelmingly pleasant to him. It was of the same quality as the voices he had heard on the porches of the officers' houses out at that hot, stagnant Cagayan post in the Philippines, while he was reduced to the company of *mestizo* belles who sucked their fingers after eating a mango. No doubt the custom was cleanly; no doubt the belles practiced it prettily; but the noise which it made was trying to certain of Tom's inbred sensibilities.

"We have a mine up at Huahuila," Miss Goodyear went on to explain, as if this were a reason for speaking to him. "Father would remain with the property, but things were getting so lively he insisted that I must go this morning."

"Yes, ma'am!" Tom assented, with automatic deference. He was still at attention; and thus he could continue to worship.

She had never seen anything so ridiculously stiff since she witnessed the Horse Guards parade in London. Was he alive? If you bored into him with a gimlet would sawdust run out in place of blood? There was a slight corrugation between her eyebrows without effac-





Miss Goodyear had drawn rein across the path of neutrality

ing her smile, as she asked, with a spectator's scientific interest in a phenomenon:

"Do you have to stand like that? Isn't it allowable to drop your rifle and rest?"

"Yes, ma'am!" he answered, with a Ground Arms, relaxing.

The "Yes, ma'am" irritated her. It seemed more in keeping with a man who was peddling vegetables at the kitchen door than with so neat appearing a unit of the armed forces of her native land.

"Is it a rule of the army always to say 'Yes, ma'am?' " she inquired.

"Custom rather than rule," he rejoined. "I think we are allowed to consider the preferences of the person addressed in such a trying time of international susceptibility as the present. Yes, Miss!" he added soberly—and not more soberly than he felt in view of something that was threatening him.

Her head went back slightly, while the wondrous eyes contemplated the sky; and she laughed over his answer in a way that made the something more threatening still.

"Thank you!" she said, ever so gratefully, as she might have thanked a stranger for a direction about roads and answering her questions as to the characteristics of the people of the locality. This was quite all she had to say, except, before she rode away, she gave him another glance with a quiver of the long lashes in further appreciation of his courtesy.

"If she is going to remain in town," he thought, "it will do a lot toward making the field officers contented with the present state of the divisional manœuvres. But I am out of it. I saluted a radiant planet as it passed by. One-two-three—I'm out of it for eleven days, at least."

In this he was mistaken. On the next day, when he was off duty, he saw her coming on the same side of the street with Captain Gallinger of his own company.

"Company G is always in the lead!" he thought, in pride of corps.

Would she remember him? Would she recognize him? Out of the question! He had had only an official interview with her. So he saluted his superior in passing, staring straight ahead at the back of the head of an imaginary private in front of him in the ranks. But some magnet unaccountably diverted the correct gaze of the drill manual. She was bowing to him! She was saying, "How do you do?" to him! He finished his salute in a most unmilitary fashion by lifting his hat, with a consciousness of extreme giddiness.

"One-two-three — only ten days more!" he gasped exaltedly.

On the next day he met her again in the street. This time she was alone. She paused as she spoke to him; and—though he was vague about how it happened, only capable of marveling at such presumption from the ranks—he found himself proceeding in the same direction that she was. He was walking on air. Afterward, he could not recall what either had said; he only knew that he had heard sweet music. He struck earth again in front of the house where she was staying. No less than five officers, including Captain Gallinger, were waiting on the porch for her to pour tea. Her glance traveled enjoyably and quizzically to their shoulder straps and back to his private's uniform.

"Wont you come in?" she asked.

A private take tea with the Captain! Tom was as loath to cross the barrier as the officers to have him, however glad they might be of his company when he was out of the army. When this barrier does not exist—the Colonel and the Drill Sergeant will tell you—you go down to defeat from an excess of Generals and a lack of privates.

"Thank you!" he said. "We in the ranks have to be very exclusive."

First, she answered with the laughing light in her eyes, which semaphored her

understanding of the situation; then she answered by extending her hand, the touch of which gave him such a thrill as makes a soldier cry, "I've got it! I'm hit!" before he calls for the Hospital Corps.

On the next day Private Galbraith did not meet her; but on the day after—the seventh before his release—they had another walk which ended in the presence of the waiting officers on the porch. To hurry the calendar, it was on the second day that she was quite late for tea, because the walk was longer than usual, taking the two to the outskirts of the town and the silence of the desert.

Private Tom Galbraith had been telling her "the story of his life" as intently as if telling the story of your life were a perfectly original thing to do. He confessed the waste of his youth; he explained the Impulse. His humility was untouched by any pride, except over his sharpshooter's medal and over that \$175.60 which he had saved out of his "17 per." His manner was desperately cool, almost detached, and soldierly direct during his narration. He was going to make good; he would find some kind of work. As he had a fair physique, at the worst he could get a start as a hod-carrier, he declared, with a dry smile.

She was most sympathetic; she was most interested in his career, as interested as she had been in that of any of the young engineers at Huahuila, for whom she had been pouring tea a week before—with the laughing light in her eyes. But, to her relief, he stopped with the story. She was glad he was not going to be foolish. Yet, all the while that she listened to him she kept thinking of the laying of a fuse to a charge of dynamite—a simile natural to the daughter of a mining man.

"One-two!"

Then, "One!"

Then the last hour of the counted days was past. He was free—an unattached citizen. His first act was to go to the Colonel and say: "It was good medicine. It has made a man of me, I hope." The Colonel had to cough to free his



The rattan chair held a girl who was staring at the street, yet saw nothing

throat before he shook former Private Galbraith's hand heartily.

Having looked forward for three years to the hour of his emancipation as one of collected thought and determined purpose, Tom found his faculties in a state of demoralization no less ungovernable than when he saw the recruiting sign on Sixth Avenue. He was in the throes of an Impulse—the second crucial Impulse of his life—when he reached the hotel where a suit of “cit’s” was in readiness.

With what discriminating care and fond anticipation he had chosen the thin summer worsteds and the tan shoes and everything to match, according to his taste! The feel of the linen collar rim on his throat was as the touch of the wings of a joyous re-incarnation. Clad in his new chrysalis, there was no longer any reason why he should keep off a certain porch, despite the tea brigade.

However, he went when he was sure that she would be alone—went on a mission that made his temples throb. In khaki he had had the story of khaki to tell—that of his past. In civilian clothes he had that of the future to decide. A storm, gathering for eleven days, had suddenly broken with his muster-out. In the swimming mist with which the intensity of his proposal surrounded him, he could not see how she received it. All the energy of his being was in the rush of his words. At least Marian Goodyear knew now that if you bored a hole in him with a gimlet, sawdust would not run out.

She was startled and she was a little frightened at first by a transport of impetuosity no less puzzling than his sentry rigidity and impersonality on the boundary line. Then, sinking in her rattan chair, her head against the back, she was as a fisher, marveling at what had

risen out of the placid deep, this time, to the unconscious casts which she was always making. Sympathetic interest in a career would not serve in this crisis. As he came to himself after his words were spent, he saw the light in her eyes mocking him with amusement. She had decided on her course. She would not take him seriously—this too literal private.

"Would you die for me?" she asked lightly—very, very lightly.

But he would not be put off in that fashion.

"Yes," he answered, as one who welcomes a forlorn hope.

"That would be most embarrassing," she proceeded, with a brittle emphasis—and laughed softly and skeptically.

This made him smile in the sudden realization of the full meaning of his promise. But the smile flickered away from firm-set lips.

"True. If I did I'd lose you. But I'd take the risk to win you!" he said.

He rose abruptly. His face had gone drawn and white, yet with a radiance in his eyes fencing gleefully with the light in hers—gleefully, yes, and madly. She saw only the madness as he stood erect before he went with so quick and so regular a step that his going had the quality of a salute in silence to a superior before starting to execute a command. The effect was so distracting that she had not recovered her poise before he had turned a street corner.

"Rude! Unreasonable! A pretense! A play!" she exclaimed defensively, and felt her cheeks go hot. How could she know that a change to a summer suit of gray would turn such an attractive private into such an impossible civilian!

One, two, three days had passed since Tom Galbraith was out of the army. No one had seen or heard of him. Probably he had taken the first train out of town, reasoned the garrison, in order to be in some place where there was a better chance to make his battle in the civil world. But the garrison was wrong; for stored in Tom Galbraith's trunk at the hotel were the summer suit, the straw hat, the tan shoes, the new tie—and also his service buttons.

It was on the fourth day that Cap-

tain Gallinger sought the porch and himself came to the point, before a vision with its head resting on the back of a rattan chair.

"Would you die for me?" asked the vision—lightly, very lightly.

Not so much her question, but her way of asking it was disconcerting to the Captain.

"Why, yes, of course!" he answered. "It's a soldier's business, and I hope that I am a soldier. But doing police duty down here in the cactus country doesn't give much opportunity."

"I see you mean all the women in a besieged city collectively, and not particularly me," she told him tartly.

"Oh, no—no!" he objected.

He was mustering his forces for a fresh start when the advance scout of the afternoon tea brigade arrived. The main body soon followed in column of twos. As file-closer, came a second lieutenant of Company G, a little late, but the bearer of news, which gave him the center of the stage.

"That dandy Private Galbraith," he announced, "did not lose any time in getting into the thick of it. He's a general already! A man just in from the trail says that he is leading a band of *insurrectos* in an attack on Huahuila to-morrow morning at daylight."

The stream from the spout of the teapot flicked over into the saucer. Miss Goodyear brought it back again with a nervous, determined movement.

"He's in luck. He gets some action," said Captain Gallinger. "But I am surprised to hear it, and it's altogether too bad. The Federals have a machine gun at Huahuila. They'll mow the *insurrectos* down like wheat."

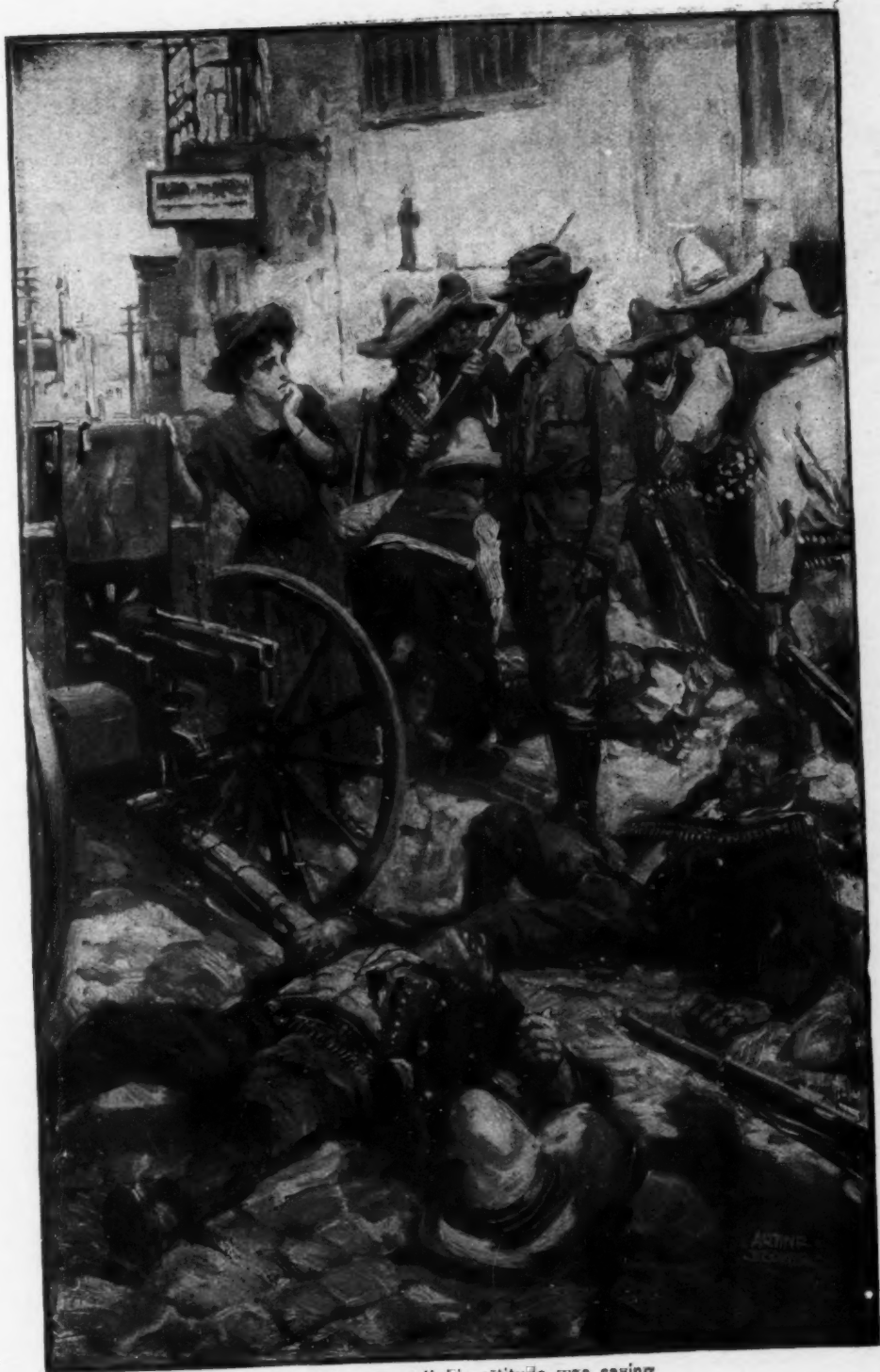
"Galbraith's the man to expose himself to the limit and go down fighting. Yes, just that sort—the private with a story," added the Lieutenant.

"One lump or two?" asked Marian of the Captain.

"One!" said the Captain.

She dropped it with a splash, making the third in the same cup. The tongs fluttered in the bowl; they beat a rat-tat-tat against a cup rim. Then she gripped them so firmly that she bent them out of





"I have to report," his attitude was saying

shape. She tried to change the subject, but the officers continued to sit in a council of war on Tcm's fate, voting his chances of living through the fight as about one to ten. Every remark sent a sharp blade through her brain.

Would they never stop talking? Would they never go? When at last they did, the rattan chair which had been the throne of her triumph held a limp, quivering girl, who was staring at the street and yet saw nothing.

"The fool! I did not ask him to! I did not tell him to! I only wanted to know if he would!" she burst out.

Yet that bit of sophistry did not help. It would not extinguish a thin little flame that was rising in her. She began to see in place of the blazing pavement beyond the lawn, a white, drawn face. "Would you die for me?" some voice was repeating, a silly, teasing voice—her own. The little flame grew and grew till it enveloped her and she sat bolt upright, with cheeks burning.

"He mustn't! He mustn't! This—this makes me an accomplice in a murder!"

It was most extraordinary that Miss Goodyear should want her horse saddled only an hour before dinner. She declared that she had such a headache that the only antidote was a gallop and to fast for the evening. To make quite sure of a cure she took her revolver; for she knew how to shoot as well as how to ride—and how, all unconsciously, to get a reputation as a flirt from no less an authority than the Colonel's wife. In the gathering darkness she rode straight across the boundary line and took the trail for Huahuila, in a state of conflicting emotions which, if they had any tangible central theme, was one of utter exasperation.

"It's putting me in a false position," she thought. "It is unfair of him, inconsiderate, ruffianly! The whole business has been ridiculous, sentimental, yes, farcical—and all due to being nice to a private because he looked so lonely, when I didn't know that he had only ten days to serve! If I had known it I would never have spoken to him. I would have ridden right behind his back

that first day. Besides, I had a right to suppose that the United States army was a sane institution. I thought recruits were examined by doctors before they were accepted."

What would people say when she did not return? When they heard where she had gone? By way of explaining her absence she saw herself drawn into one petty prevarication after another, until she had mothered a whole chain of lies.

"All on his account—on account of a stranger—when I hadn't given him the slightest encouragement!" she blazed. "This is my reward for being sympathetic with a private who wanted to rise in the world."

When she passed stray figures on the trail she put her horse to the run. A group of men, brigands or *insurrectos* or what not, halted her. Her fingers slipped to the handle of the revolver and she cried: "An errand of mercy!" and they let her pass. On, on she rode, over the dusty trail, among the dim, shadowy patches of the low cactus and the goblin spikes of the giant cactus, noting this and that familiar landmark and timing her progress by it.

She had in all forty miles to go; and saving her pony's energy by avoiding bursts of speed, making the most of it by keeping him to a dog-trot, she ought to arrive before daybreak. At times she felt the fear of the night; again, the exhilaration of the cool air and the mystery of the faint moonlight. Had anyone told her twelve hours before that she would make such a dangerous and compromising journey for any man on earth she would have laughed softly at the idea, with the skepticism of one relishing a flight of absurdity. Now she laughed angrily and wildly.

"All I ask is to be just in time to stop him!" she thought. "To tell him he needn't die for me! Then he can go ahead and die on his own account as many times as he wants to. And—and what if he says—it would be just like him to say: 'I'm not doing this for you; I'm doing it for the cause!' Yes, he would be just crazy enough for that!"

"Let him say it! I don't care! My conscience will be free. I shall be glad



to know he did not take me seriously. Glad—yes; but what an idiot his saying so would make me seem! An idiot pursuing this stranger just because I tried to be nice to a private—one of thousands of privates in the United States Army."

She was raging half hysterically with mortification over the picture that her imagination painted.

"I—I—" and a light broke on her. "Of course! I'm going to save father—not him!" And her half-hysteria changed to laughing triumph. Why hadn't she thought of that before? She had, subconsciously, she knew. It had been her real motive from the start.

"Of course! It is all perfectly clear, now!" she concluded.

The explanation would suggest itself to all her friends. They would say that, naturally, she could not bear to be away from her father's side when he was in danger. In jubilant relief, she began whistling airs from light operas.

Now the darkness was becoming so intense that she could not see the path over which the pony knowingly piloted his steps, with an occasional displaced stone rattling down into a canyon. At last they were at the top of the divide, where she let him pause for a breath. There remained only a little over a mile to go. She would be in time.

They had barely started to descend on the other slope when she realized her miscalculation. It was in the period of the longest days of the year. The quick dawn of the southern summer broke over the valley and the rising sun developed the walls and roofs of Huahuila. This was a signal for groups of men to rise from their hiding-places on the outskirts and start running into the streets. At the head of the largest group was a figure in khaki.

"Fool!" she shouted toward him tragically; but he was out of earshot. "Fool! fool!" she repeated prayerfully, desperately, her voice lost in the rattle of rifle-fire which began as the attackers disappeared among the houses.

She had ceased to analyze her emotions. In fact, from plural they had been resolved into singular. She had only one

remaining and it was in the end of her riding-whip as it came down over her pony's flank. Foam-covered, she left him when she came to the beginning of the main street. Gradually the firing had died down into a silence which was as nerve-stretching and ominous as that of tense expectancy before a dynamite blast. The population was all indoors; not a living thing was in sight except a stray dog.

Still she proceeded, unthinking, unconscious of any fear, borne on by the current of an incomprehensible force. She knew every house, every hump and depression of the miserable pavement. That barber's sign ahead was just at a turn of the street. There she could see into the plaza, which commanded all the approaches to the center of the town; and there she paused before the stretch of cobblestones which ended in a low barricade of bags, with a rapid-fire gun in the middle. On either side of the gun lay a row of Federal soldiers, awaiting an attack. At the first sign of movement, without waiting to see whether it was made by man or woman, they fired.

Three or four hot breaths whistled by her. She sprang into the barber's door, instinctively, as she would have dodged a falling brick. Again silence; and with her recovery from the first shock of her baptism of fire, she cautiously looked out. The alley on the other side of the street a little farther on was packed with men and rifles, with steeple hats and dark faces as a background for one white face in campaign hat, peering around the corner of a building.

"I'm in time!" she called. "Stop! Don't! Don't—not for me!"

But Tom had not seen or heard her. Even as she spoke, he had turned, with a nod and a word to his band. As if in pantomimic mockery of her passionate and futile plea he dropped flat, rifle in hand, on the pavement, hugging the wall of the building. Quick as his movement was, the men in the barricade had seen it. At the same time they had seen a figure, her own, spring forward from the opposite side of the street; and they judged that the attack was about to begin.

"No! no! Don't! I'm here! I forbid!"

Her adjuration came from lips frozen still. She was not able even to whisper the cry in her heart. She thought that she must go to him; but her legs would not move in face of the blast of the rapid-fire gun which now began its fiendish song.

He was not a tennis court's length away from her and yet he seemed an eternity of distance—a miniature at a telescope's end. It was death for her to leave the doorway, death for her to draw his attention so that he would raise his head from the cover he had, into that hose-play of lead. His face was white and drawn as it had been when he left her on the porch, but enlivened by a hunter's ravening concentration. He was as still as the rifle barrel resting in his hand. He had not yet fired a shot, but seemed waiting at the gate of an inferno with the domestic calm of a cat at a mouse-hole. Such indifferent coolness made her afraid of him as well as afraid for him.

The bullets left white spots on the cobbles and whizzed like pin-wheels and ricocheted on; they knocked dust and fragments out of the walls. One fragment from a hole not an inch above his head fell on his back and lay there as it might on that of a dead man.

And all the while, some new force seemed to flow molten into her being—a force which would remain with her forever, a force which she could not understand until it had cooled. Yet she knew that it brought in a second what years might not have developed. And she knew already that it could excoriate her, laugh her to scorn, repeat in her ears, in the midst of the whistling and swishing and pinging in the tortured air, a recollection of a light, teasing voice saying: "Would you die for me?"

Would he never fire? Was he lying there simply to be killed? Was it his plan to pluck death, face to the enemy—this madman, this fool, this soldier with a story whom she once conjectured to be of sawdust—while his finger lay against the trigger which he did not press? With the rise of her fighting instinct, she wanted him to strike back. Finally,

a circle of vaporish-light smoke blew out from his rifle barrel. With that the rat-tat-tat from the plaza suddenly ceased. He had bided his time until the only man who knew how to manipulate the rapid-fire gun exposed himself; and his aim had been unerring.

Now there was only a drizzle of bullets as the result of the confusion among the defenders over their loss. Again she started toward him, calling; only to see him rise and hear his shout, as a flood of steeple hats broke out of the alley. With him at their head they rushed toward the plaza, in face of the emptying magazines of the Federals. One of their number dropped under their feet as the price of every yard they ran. She closed her eyes not to see him, who was the very bull's-eye of that swarming target, fall. When there was silence and no sound of a bullet, in a slow-dissolving mist she was scanning each prostrate figure up to the plaza itself. All had steeple hats beside them; not one was in khaki.

Yet one body lay limp over the barricade, which signified that there had been fighting on the other side of it; and among the gesticulating victors around the rapid-fire gun she did not see their leader. This hurried her on in the throes of renewed fear, picking her way among the dead and groaning men. Breathless, she arrived. A question, faint and quivering, was on her lips, when Galbraith rose from his attentions to one of the wounded; and the others made way for him, with a primitive sort of awe, as he stood, with his peculiar soldierly erectness and a certain bland humility which took the place of salute.

"I have to report," his attitude was saying.

She went white and swayed. He started to her support, but she gripped the shield of the rapid-fire gun to steady herself and waved him away. Then in the reaction of pride she stood free of the shield, her cheeks in a flood of color, blazing defiance and quivering as she raised herself to her toe-tips.

"Fool! Fool!" she said. "You—you didn't think that I—for I didn't! I *didn't*! I came to save father!"

"Which leaves no doubt as to my fu-

ture occupation," he returned, with superb earnestness. "I did not die for you this time, but there will be lots more chances, and I shall succeed yet."

"N—not with my consent!" she breathed; and he saw the laughing light in her eyes fluid with something richer than laughter.

As for that sturdy-appearing, middle-aged man who now came out of the

company offices, he looked able to take care of himself without any assistance from a relieving force. He concluded, after due consideration, that former Private Galbraith, despite his inclination to impulses, had a certain determined way of gaining his ends which, in all probability, would make him worth considerably more than "17 per" in the mining industry.

## The Cat and The Crusader

BY

LUCILLE BALDWIN VAN SLYKE

Author of "The Dazzler," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY BLANCHE F. WRIGHT



Leslie

AUNT EUNICE suggested at breakfast that, instead of lolling around all the morning, William might put a few nails in the lattice of the back yard fence. William had been staying at Aunt Eunice's for the month of May while Uncle Burdick took baths at Hot Springs. By the end of the first week William was under the impression that he, too, would soon require a visit to Hot Springs.

Aunt Eunice lived in Brooklyn, on

the Heights. William felt that *in the depths* would have expressed it more succinctly. The fact that he was a Crawford, on his father's side, was about the only reason that Aunt Eunice ever tolerated her grand-nephew. In recent years he had lived joyously under the ban of her disapproval, partly because he persisted in stopping in smart bachelor quarters instead of the hall-room of struggling-youth tradition, but principally because he pursued an occupation

that did not necessitate his being at the office "bright and early." Aunt Eunice was sure that, eventually, he would come to an end unworthy of the dignity of a Crawford.

"The lattice," remarked Aunt Eunice, "for some strange reason seems to be a bit weakened. It really is not a suitable protection against marauding animals. But I fancy a few nails would greatly strengthen it."

"M-M-mnmn—" murmured William over his paper.

"And Henry is always so happy in the yard that I dislike to curtail his liberty any more than is necessary," his aunt added.

"M-mn-mn," agreed William, grinning over a rival's poor golf score.

"Maria has already placed the stepladder, the hammer and some nails in the area way," continued Aunt Eunice. "I should like the matter attended to as soon as possible, for Maria and Jane are going to use the yard to dry curtains this morning."

"I'm not at all good at that sort of thing," objected William, weakly.

"If it required any particular skill I should not have asked you," answered Aunt Eunice. "It simply needs a few nails."

William fled to the back yard. You can't argue with a Supreme Court decision or Aunt Eunice.

He adjusted the stepladder gingerly, put the hammer and nails on the concrete path, took off his coat and began slowly to ascend the treads. Half-way up he paused. On the other side of the fence he could distinguish sounds of wordy strife.

"You-all cayn't have no sense, Missy, to undertooken sich a contraption. 'Sides all dat, takin' dis postses offen dis fence is jes' natchelly bound to spoil dat lettuce wuk 'round de top. Whereall am ah goin' to put my closes Mondays if you all goes and tuks down all the linesses—"

The grumble was interrupted by a peal of the merriest, most infectious laughter that William had heard for many a day. He promptly went up three treads of the ladder and peered through

the interstices of the unstable lattice.

In the little plot below, the laughter bubbled on and on. It came from red, red lips, from between pretty, pretty teeth, from alluring dimples and dancing, brown curls—from a little heap of woman-clothes that were seemingly dumped on the gravel path. The clothes weren't much. They were just a gingham pinafore, a pink silk dressing-sack, a last year's frayed silk petticoat beneath which obtruded some rather soiled but sturdy little tennis shoes. Miss Leslie Gordon had some masonry work to do, and she thought she was dressed appropriately.

She lifted the wooden spoon with which she was mixing her plaster and waved it nonchalantly at the scolding maid.

"See here, Clara Belle May Frances Williard Jiggetts, is this going to be my garden or yours? You and your 'closes!' You use this yard for clothes just one day in the week, and I am going to use it—well, for whatever I choose on the other six. Doesn't a majority like that always rule? And as for loosening that old 'lettuce' work, I don't care a scrap. The old Burdock lady needn't have put it up. She doesn't own the air—the Wright brothers do!"

William went up the last step of all and sat down. He had always felt an interest in the laboring classes and this was the first opportunity he had to study masons. This mason put down her spoon and held up a small pail.

"Go on, Clara Belle May, that's a good girl. Get me some more water." The maid disappeared grumblingly.

The mason picked a big book that lay open on the pebbles and buried her pretty little nose in the covers.

"Amateur Concrete Work," said the cover. "How to Build a Japanese Garden."

William grinned as he read it. The mason tucked her feet comfortably beneath her petticoat, reached one dusty little hand to fasten the pin that held the pinafore about her neck, and sighed.

"By Jove!" thought William, staring at the pin, "that's a Ki Sigh pin! That's certainly a Ki Sigh pin!"



He leaned further over to make sure that the glistening object was really a fraternity pin. The weakened lattice had meekly endured the burden of William's hundred and sixty pounds of avoirdupois, but it was not equal to the strain of William's ten thousand pounds of curiosity. It gave way without so much as a warning creak. It deposited William swiftly into the messy bucket of amateur concrete work.

The next few moments William Langhorne Crawford enjoyed himself as he had never enjoyed himself before. The gentle fingers of Miss Leslie Gordon bathed his mortared brow; Miss Clara May Belle Frances Willard Jiggetts was removing the plaster from the rest of his anatomy, and all three of them were perfectly happy.

Ten minutes later he made his exit over the fence whence he had come.

"I assure you," he said gallantly as he stood, one foot on the Gordon's kitchen-stool and the other on the top rail, "it has been nothing but a pleasure, Miss Gordon."

"It's dear of you to say so," prattled Leslie, her face lifted sweetly, "but I'll never, never forgive myself!"

"I shall never forgive you unless you *do* forgive yourself," protested William, now safely back on the ladder.

"Well," pouted Leslie, "if you put it that funny way! And—and—I hope sometime when you aren't *too* busy you can send me that name of the book your friend used when he made his garden. If it isn't *too* much trouble."



Miss Leslie Gordon had some masonry work to do

"It won't be," replied William glibly. "I'll 'phone him this afternoon and let you know this evening."

He managed, by spending most of the afternoon in the book shops, to find a book with approximately the inane title that his versatile fancy of the morning had invented, and together, under the rose-colored shade of the study lamp, they planned how to make a Brooklyn back-yard look like the first act of "Madame Butterfly."

"I'm just daffy over it," chattered Leslie. "I sha'n't mind the work at all."

"I fancy the heavier part of it will be rather more than you ought to tackle; I'm awfully interested in the experi-

ment. Now, I'm rather good with a hammer. Maybe I could knock together the mould for that moon-dial pedestal for you in the morning."

"How angelic of you!" she cried softly. "That's the part I dreaded most! I always bang my thumbs so! I think it's perfectly wonderful the way you men—"

"Where is *The Daily Hawk*?" demanded a stern voice at the doorway. "Some one has taken it from my desk."

"Oh, father!" the girl apologized, "I'm so sorry! We were reading the gardening page. I didn't know—"

"You always know," grunted the voice, "that I leave the editorials until after my coffee. I had only read through the second column of to-night's leading editorial, and—"

"Father," interrupted Leslie timidly, "I think you've not met Mr. Crawford yet."

"Mr. Who?" said father, adjusting his glasses.

"Crawford—" stammered Leslie.

"Crawford of Crawford and Billings?" asked Mr. Gordon, suspiciously.

"No," said William, "I'm on the staff of *The Evening Earth*."

"Do you write their editorials?" queried Mr. Gordon, belligerently.

"Not guilty," laughed William. "I'm just finishing an anti-noise crusade we've been carrying on for a month or so against unnecessary street noises. After a deal of hammering," he ended with careless pride, "we've got the Board of Aldermen to pass an ordinance to do away with street cries, junk—"

"Upon my word!" gasped Mr. Gordon, "I've never heard anything worse than the racket we've had in the last week! It's worse than it ever was!"

"Well," protested William, "it's up to the public now. We got the law passed for them—all they've got to do is enforce it."

"Young man," Mr. Gordon exploded irritably, "may I ask whether you ever personally caused the arrest of a noisy vender?"

"Well, I—"

"I have!" announced Mr. Gordon, "and after I, a prominent citizen, from

purely disinterested motives, gave an entire morning of my valuable time and went down into an evil-smelling courtroom, a little whippersnapper of an insignificant magistrate that I helped elect, ruled that I had no cause for action! No cause for action! And this quiet, exclusive, beautiful, old residential street absolutely at the mercy of leather-lunged heathen of all nationalities! Junk men! Hucksters! Beggars—!"

"Daddy, dear," protested Leslie, "that was such a long time ago! And think of the beautiful letter of yours *The Daily Hawk* printed!"

Mr. Gordon drew a long breath.

"Well, I may say," he murmured with gratification, "that the paper did seem appreciative of my efforts. They gave my letter a good position and even went so far as to comment editorially on the matter. Perhaps you may remember the affair, Crawford? It occurred in April, 1907."

Mr. Gordon settled himself amiably in the biggest chair, put his eye glasses on the table and began:

"In the first place it was a banana vender, if I remember rightly, was it not, daughter? A banana vender who—"

Leslie groaned softly and William sighed. The wearisome account of the encounter with the banana man flowed on and on. The precious moments that might have been spent in the exciting study of amateur masonry were helplessly slipping away. Mr. Gordon told his tale imperturbably, with a nice regard for detail. He recounted dramatically how seven policemen had refused to arrest Giovanni Pinochi, how—

Suddenly a prolonged, blood-curdling, uncanny, hair-raising cry broke in upon the even rise of Mr. Gordon's sentences. Leslie covered her pretty little ears with her pretty little fingers, William shivered, and Mr. Gordon grew slowly purple. He sprang from his chair.

"This is a damnable outrage!" he exploded.

"What is it?" whispered William in awe-stricken tones.

"It is a cat," shouted Mr. Gordon, "a miserable, overfed, woman-pampered cat!"



There was a moment of impressive silence.

"Mr. Crawford," continued the elder man in a flatly monotonous burst of eloquence, "if you want to crusade against something of real importance you ought to take up this outrage—this wholesale nuisance—this permitting irresponsible persons to harbor cats! If I want to keep a dog—a perfectly harmless, nay even useful watch-dog, I have to pay for a license; I have to keep him muzzled; I become responsible for any little property he may destroy playfully—but cats! There is absolutely no law regarding cats! My neighbor, from pure maliciousness, may keep unlimited numbers of these disgraceful creatures to annoy me by day and disturb me by night."

Mr. Gordon was striding rhetorically about the room, waving his arms dramatically, stumbling recklessly over rugs and stools while without, as if in stirring *obbligato* to his impassioned outburst, the cries of the cat arose—loud, full tones, now melancholy, now triumphant. Leslie ran to the window and peered into the street.

"It's the maltese," she whispered ominously.

"By heavens!" ejaculated Mr. Gordon, "if I were not afraid of injuring some innocent passer-by I would shoot that animal. It is an outrage to decency. Mr. Crawford, are you or are you not a young man of spirit? Are you going to sit tamely by and let this thing go on? You acknowledge you're a crusader—a modern crusader—well, sir, in the name of humanity I beg of you to crusade against these fiendish destroyers of peace!"

"I don't know," said William, swallowing his unholy mirth, "whether the—er—policy of the paper—whether my city editor would feel—"

"Sir!" cried Mr. Gordon, "if your city editor does not feel that it is time something was done about this great civic problem he is no fit person to be entrusted with the great responsibility of moulding public opinion—the great—"

The noise of the fray without rose still higher; other feline voices had

joined the deep tones of the first soloist.

"Night after night," Mr. Gordon added bitterly, "this sort of thing goes on, openly encouraged by an unprincipled woman. Mr. Crawford, if you could succeed in getting a protective law against this outrage, your name would go down in history as a benefactor."

William's eyes sought Leslie's. She sighed appealingly.

"Isn't it too dreadful?" she whispered.

William rose determinedly.

"Mr. Gordon," he announced impetuously, "I will do whatever I can—"

"Sir," said the elder man, shaking his hand vigorously, "you are a gentleman! If you will honor me by coming out to the sideboard—?"

Thus over their Scotch they vowed death to cats. Leslie's fair fingers filled their glasses; Leslie's smile sent a warmer glow through his being than her father's liquor; and when he left them, later, he stood for a moment on the door-step smiling idiotically into the quiet street. After all, Brooklyn was a pretty fair sort of place.

Half-way up Aunt Eunice's steps he caught a glimpse of something moving slowly along the door sill. He paused. It was a cat!

Grim determination wrote itself on his youthful brow. He would not wait to begin the printed crusade, he would capture every individual specimen he could and convey them personally to the Painless Asphyxiation Association for Suffering Beasts. He hunched himself into a boyish heap.

"Here, puss, puss, puss!" he whispered, persuasively, "come, puss, puss, puss!"

The moving spot stood still, arched itself, bristled its tail and sprang over the railing. William gave chase. Down the street, into areaways, stumbling over the neat little rows of milk jars waiting for their master's carts; over half-emptied ash-cans, over wholly filled garbage-cans, sped the cat and followed William. At length the beast lodged itself in a scrawny tree at the corner and looked down with baleful, gleaming eyes upon William, who panted below.

The public spirited Mr. Crawford, having cast an anxious eye about and having discerned no police in sight, laboriously climbed the scrawny tree. A moment later he vaingloriously descended from that tree clutching a large, dusty, spitting feline. He buttoned it to his bosom and fled.

Half-way up the stairs the wretch gave vent to a muffled yowl. William stood paralyzed with dismay. Aunt Eunice's door was flung open and Aunt Eunice, swathed in the remains of Uncle Burdick's 1880 spring overcoat, leaned over the railing.

"William," she called, "did you hear that noise?"

"What noise?" asked William cautiously, gritting his teeth as the cat's talons sunk into his chest.

"That moan! I'm sure something has happened to Henry Ward Talmadge!"

In the dimly lighted hallway, pressing the struggling cat close, William stared up, bewildered, at his agitated relative.

"There, there, Aunt Eunice," he murmured pacifically, "you had a bit too much pudding for dinner; you'd better go straight back to bed."

"I knew," whimpered Aunt Eunice, wringing her hands, "that something would happen when that lattice fell; I had a feeling he would get cut."

"Did you have him in the back yard?" asked William, thinking it better to humor her.

"He is always in the yard these fair, warm nights. Once I thought I heard him defending himself against some rough cats—"

"Cats!" stammered William, "cats!"

"Yes, cats," she answered sharply, "there are several in the neighborhood, but Henry never seemed to care for them."

William clutched the cat so tightly that it moaned again.

Aunt Eunice peered more closely over the stair rail.

"Come, puss, puss, puss!" she called. William collapsed meekly against the wall.

"Why didn't you say he was a cat?" he demanded.

"William," said Aunt Eunice sternly, "what is the matter with you? There has been something the matter with you ever since you fell from the fence this morning. Of course, you know Henry is a cat. I told you all about him the night you arrived. He was given me by a second cousin of the Ward Talmadge family, and he is fifth in descent from their favorite maltese. I wouldn't have anything happen to that cat for worlds. I don't know what your uncle would say if anything should happen. He is just as intelligent as a baby—Come, Henry! Come, puss!" she called, lovingly.

Henry squirmed restlessly. William pulled his coat more firmly over the struggling beast.

"Aunt Eunice," he said, trying to speak carelessly, "I think he's all right—I think he came in when I did—I noticed a cat on the doorsill, just before I came in."

"Oh!" Mrs. Burdick sighed, "I'm so relieved! What a scare I did have! Why didn't you say so in the first place? Good-night."

"Good-night!" groaned William, stepping through his own door and kicking it close after him.

He leaned against the door weakly as he dropped his arms. The cat bounded lightly to the bed and glared at him. He was old and battle-scarred, was this fifth in descent from his famous ancestor, and he stared at his tormentor with the baleful stare of malignant majesty.

William caught a glimpse of his disheveled self, his bleeding countenance and battered headgear, in the dressing-table mirror and shook an angry fist at his catship.

"Gad!" he murmured with suppressed emotion, "asphyxiation is too good for you—you ought to be boiled!"

"Me—ow!" snarled Henry.

For a full moment they stared at each other with silent hatred, then simultaneously they sprang for each other and clutched in mortal strife. At length, breathless from the fray, William thrust the wriggling beast into the bottom drawer of the chiffonier and slammed it shut. Then he sat down to think.

Inside the drawer Henry thumped and

yowled. Outside, in the street, as if in answer to his cries, the gathering feline clans howled defiance.

"Suffering cats!" ejaculated William with unconscious propriety, "old Gordon's right about it. By Jove," he muttered, pacing the floor in his stocking feet, "he's hit on a pretty good thing! I'll bet 'Nick' will fall for it—it ought to play up pretty good—they're a confounded nuisance all over this burg—it's a wonder somebody didn't get after 'em before! It's enough to drive a fellow wild! Must be bad for children too—blood poisoning from scratches—germs in the dirty fur and all that sort of thing. They're enough to terrify women—these wild ones—"

A sudden vision of Leslie's pretty, little hands flying toward Leslie's pretty ears flashed upon him. A slow smile crept over his bleeding face; he did not even grimace when the smart of the witch hazel sunk deep into Henry's foot prints. He put down the bottle and sighed.

"Gee—guess that would make rather a hit—standing solid with papa like that," he thought; "guess papa would deliver the goods too."

And he fell asleep to dream of a fur-clad Leslie who perched on a latticed tree and threw down bits of mortar that fell like kisses to his rapturous lips.

The jangle of the breakfast bell aroused him. He dressed hurriedly.

"Good-morning, nephew," Aunt Eunice greeted him gravely. "Are you quite sure that Henry came in with you last evening? No one has seen him since you did."



A trig little figure in a white middy

William gazed uncomfortably into his grape fruit.

"He sure did," he managed to say, "or else some one exactly like him."

Aunt Eunice sighed.

"Dear me! I hope so! It would make your uncle much worse if I should have to write him any bad news. A carpenter came about the lattice," she continued. "He's sure that those disagreeable people next door have been tampering with the fence. I sent Maria with a note asking them to desist from their pernicious meddling."

William twisted uneasily.

"Very disagreeable people," Aunt Eunice went on, quite forgetting her

anxiety about the cat. "We've had a great deal of trouble with them first and last. The man is not a gentleman—he has a chit of a daughter who flirts disgracefully with every man she can get a chance at—" William sat up sharply. "They keep their house full of disgracefully lazy colored servants and for a long time they possessed a most disreputable dog, which I am glad to say has died recently."

"Indeed!" muttered her grand-nephew darkly, and fled without half finishing his coffee.

"Flirts!" he thought grimly. "Well, just let her try it with me! I'll show her!"

Something whizzed by him on the stairs as he turned in the hallway. At his door he encountered Maria.

"I'm sure, Mr. Crawford," said Maria sedately, "your aunt would feel very bad to hear about what I heard a-clawin' around in your shirt drawer almost suffocated."

William dug deep into his pocket and drew forth a bill. It was a rather greasy-looking bill—one corner was fastened with a bit of gummed paper—but the figure 2 was still discernible.

"Maria," William replied, impressively, "I trust Mrs. Burdick won't be troubled with that little detail."

"No, sir!" said Maria. "No, sir, she won't, thank you!"

He went in and glared at himself in the mirror, tried on seven different ties, covered his scratches with talcum and crept softly down stairs.

"Flirts," he muttered grimly, as he closed the front door behind him; "well, she can't flirt with me!"

"Yas, sir!" said Clara May's colleague, "step right out into the yarden—Miss Leslie said you was to—"

Miss Gordon had evidently changed her mind during the night as to what constituted the proper uniform for masons. He caught a glimpse of a trig little figure in a white middy with dancing curls half hidden under a bewitching sun-hat.

"Aren't you nice to come early?" she called. "I thought probably you'd forget all about it."

And then and there William set himself determinedly to teach Miss Leslie Gordon not to flirt. Every blow of his hammer showed his deadly purpose. The mould for the moon-dial shivered under the vengeful force of his energy. The carpenter who was repairing the lattice looked down upon him scornfully.

"It's none of my business, you down there," he cried when his patience had passed all bounds, "but you can't put in screws with a hammer—you're a-slittin' your wood all up."

Leslie's pretty laughter rang out.

"Oh, Mr. Crawford," she bubbled, "how stupid of us not to have noticed that— Let's stop awhile anyhow; I haven't told you yet how splendid it was of you to be so perfectly sweet about papa last night. He does hate cats so—he's not always as stern as that—but, you see, they always make him perfectly unreasonable."

"I do not consider," answered William, seriously, "that he is at all unreasonable in his attitude." He felt of his scratches ruefully. "I think it's a very good idea of his to license them."

"I suppose," mused Leslie, "they could wear them on their neck ribbons, if the tags were teenty-weenty— Silver ones would be rather cute."

A careful cough interrupted them. William looked up. Above the bench where they were closely sitting loomed Maria's head. She was standing on the ladder to show the carpenter where to put the clothes hooks.

"Why, Mr. Crawford!" she said, "what a start you did give me! Who'd ever have thought of seeing you down there?"

William looked up with a sigh and a grin. Once more he dug deep in his pocket and brought forth once more a tattered bill. He gravely presented it to Maria.

"You really ought not to get too many starts in one day," he decided; "it's very bad for me."

"Yes, sir!" said Maria.

The first lesson in flirting was not finished when Clara Belle announced luncheon. He sternly declined Miss Gordon's invitation and fled office-ward.



"Mr. Nicholas," he suggested as he adroitly hurried up toward the desk with an air of importance, "I think I've hit on a pretty good idea for a new crusade."

"Sss-ssh!" said the city editor; "not so loud, you're violating your new ordinance."

"Well, this one is a peach—it's cats."

"Cats!"

"'Raus mit 'em! *A bas* to all without licenses—enormous revenue to the city—sweet sleep to the merry villagers—"

Nicholas got up solemnly and shook young Crawford's hand.

"Crawford," he murmured admiringly, "you have hit on the biggest thing that has happened since the insurance investigation. You can go right up and begin on the court beneath my bed-room window. You'll find all the furniture of our flat, except the baby, out there where I gently tossed it at eighteen Tommies last night. Please toss it back up to the Missus, for we will need it to-night."

"I mean this seriously," answered Crawford, "I'm not kidding, Mr. Nicholas."

"Great Scott! I'm not kidding—If the 'Chief' will stand for it you can go the limit on it."

"Stand for it," said the Chief, admiringly, when Nicholas presented the idea at the day's conference, "I should say we would stand for it! I'd give my bottom dollar some nights if there were twenty-nine less cats in the driveway outside our house. Come on out and we'll have a catnip on it. Whose tip? Crawford's? He's a bright boy, that kid—we'll play it up big."

And thus began *The Evening Earth's* great humanitarian crusade against vagrant cats.

#### THE UNLICENSED CAT MUST GO MENACE TOO LONG IGNORED

With double column heads, with flaring photographs, with neatly "boxed" statistics, with harrowing tales of insomnia victims, with horror paragraphs that told of the deadly tetanus and hy-

drophobia that lurked in the claws and teeth of the cat, with frightful drawings of the germs found on the single paw of a cat previously fondled by a child dying from scarlet fever, with rows of figures showing the immense saving to the poor in the amount of food consumed by these useless pets—with all these things William juggled gleefully, night after night, in his great crusade against the homeless felines who ranged unchecked throughout the sacred confines of Manhattan, Queens, Richmond and the Bronx, not forgetting occasionally to mention Jersey and Westchester's sufferings.

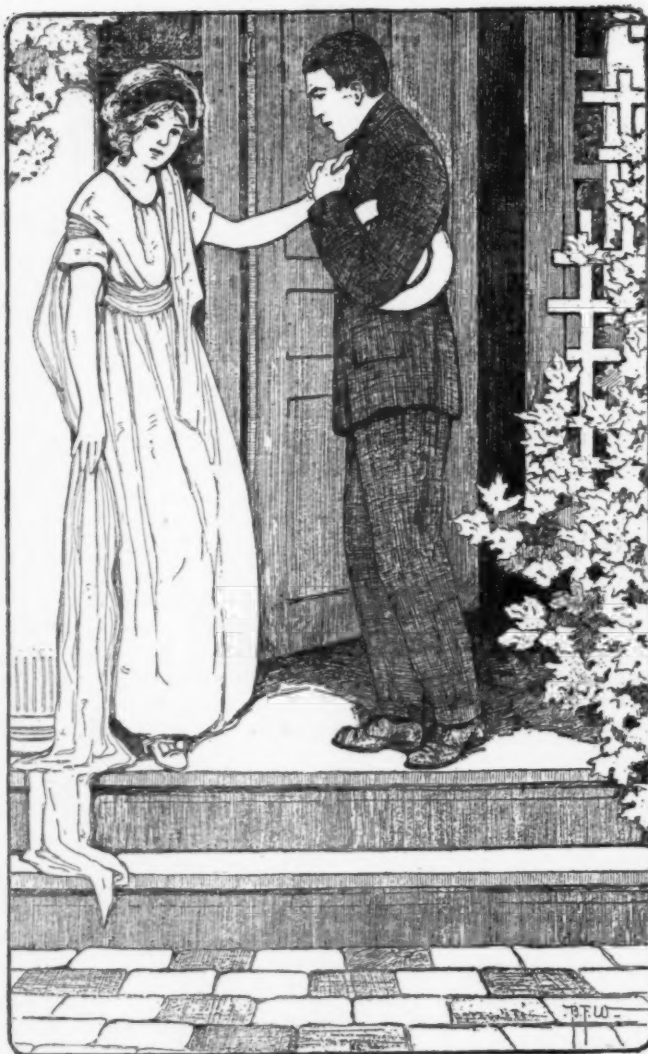
Alderman Adolph Sulzberger, young and enthusiastic, made an impassioned address to his peers when he introduced his famous cat-license ordinance, that stirred up days of endless strife in the Board of Aldermen.

"Vas harmless chickens vot make noise only ven ringin' up de egg register allowed? No! Vas useful pigs vot eat garbage dat oderwise cost mooch to remove, allowed? No! Vas fait'ful dogs vot guard property allowed mitout tags? No!

"Vy, den, cats, vot aint no use mit nobody, but maybe a few rats—and not so good bei dat eider for ve pay a rat contract efery year und indifid-you-ly try traps—should dese cats be allowed vree? No!"

While the Board wrangled merrily over the problem *The Evening Earth* in startling headlines offered five cents reward for every stray cat brought to its basement entrance between the hours of eight a. m. and five p. m., said cats to be held and fed for three days, at the expiration of which time all cats unidentified by owners should be turned over to the Asphyxiation Association for Suffering Beasts.

It was a fair sight in those days to see William superintending the feeding of tribes. It was a fairer sight to see William assisting the janitor to find "a sort of grey like kitten, with blue eyes, and maybe a white spot or two on it," for a fair claimant who couldn't tell her own when they brought out eleven answering to the description. And the fair-



"Good-night," he whispered victoriously

est sight of all was William pondering over the problem of who would identify the eighteen baby kittens that Mesdames Tabitha, Tomasine and Mewsette added to the sum total.

Day after day Mr. Gordon commended him; day after day his daughter listened, Desdemona like, to the tales of her lover's exploits.

"William, my lad," said Mr. Gordon, on the eve of the day when the great cat-license ordinance would be presented to the aldermanic body for a final deci-

sion, "to-morrow is going to be the greatest day of your life!"

He settled himself complacently to the reading of *The Daily Hawk*. The only flaw in the month's happiness had been *The Hawk's* indifference to the great civic exertions of its Manhattan contemporary. Suddenly he bounded to the rug with a belligerent oath.

"By Heracles!" he cried out so suddenly that Leslie did not have time to disentangle her fingers from William's. "By Heracles! Listen to the sneaking, underhanded letter this infernal sheet has allowed to be printed on its editorial page!"

He was trembling with rage; he could not read aloud, but with a helpless gesture waved the paper toward William, who scanned its columns anxiously.

To the editor of *The Evening Hawk*:  
Esteemed Sir.

Having been a constant reader of your valued organ during the many years of my residence in this beautiful city of homes, I write to protest against the wanton, inhuman campaign now being waged by a New York paper against our dearest and most domestic animal—the cat.

Night after night their persecution of the fireside sphinx has gone on unchecked. Last evening they took it upon themselves to set a price on the



defenseless heads of every dear little creature within the boundaries of this great city. Cannot something be done about this?

I have had a cat for the past seven years who has brought so much comfort into our lives that I feel constrained for his sake to speak in defense of his kind.

This cat—a beautiful animal, who I may state in passing was presented to me by a woman who received his parent from the family of a noted divine—this cat has lived faithfully with us, never leaving us, and has always kept our house—a very large one—comparatively free from objectionable vermin (with the exception of a few water roaches in the spring of 1902). He has been not only a friend, but, in a sense, a protector of our family.

This loved friend has for days been deprived of his just amount of liberty because of the senseless agitation that your miserable contemporary has aroused against his kind.

Forgetting for the moment the great wrong they are doing the animal kingdom, let us think of the colossal damage their action must have upon the minds, the plastic minds, of the young of this city! It cannot but encourage them in being brutal to dumb beasts.

I am a member of the D.T.'s C. U.; the W.A.R.'s; the Civic League for Anti-suffragette Propaganda among Thinking Women, and many other influential organizations and I intend to use all my energy in urging them to act in this matter. Cannot we be assured of your valuable support?

I am, sir,

Yours respectfully,

G. Eunice Crawford-Burdick.

32 Liberty Heights.

"Whew!" whistled William. "Whew!"

Leslie caught the paper from his hands and stared at it.

"Oh!" she cried. "They've got a two column editorial about it!"

"They" had! A rhetorical, polysyllabic, dignified editorial upholding the appeal of G. Eunice Crawford-Burdick and adding opinions of their own—in short "they" arose to the defense of the cat.

Mr. Gordon fairly rent the sheet from his daughter's trembling hands.

"William Crawford," he sputtered, "for thirty-five years I have been a subscriber to *The Daily Hawk*—frequently

I have been an advertiser in their want column; nay, more, at times from purely disinterested motives I have been an unbiased, fair-minded contributor to their editorial page—but from this night all this ceases—not another copy of the nefarious sheet shall come into this house—not another copy! I am going to my desk to write canceling my subscription!"

As he pounded angrily past the telephone in the hall a still more revolutionary idea crossed his mind. He rushed back to the study.

"Mr. Crawford!" he cried, impressively, "I am going to TELEPHONE them to stop my paper!"

"Dear! Dear!" gasped Leslie, in dismay, "whatever will Clara Belle do—none of the other papers are large enough to cover the gas stove!"

"Y-yes," stammered William, almost sobbing with glee, while he listened to Mr. Gordon's arraignment of "Central" for not getting the number instantaneously; "y-yes—oh, y-yes!"

"Do you know," confided Leslie, leaning childishly across the table, "I'm awfully afraid of papa, when he's angry like this. I'm always glad when someone is here—it frightens me less."

William forgot his mirth as he gazed deep into her blue, blue eyes.

"Don't be frightened," he murmured tenderly, "don't ever be frightened of anything, child, when I am here."

An hour and a half later she softly opened the front door to let him go.

"Good-night, my own," she breathed.

"Good-night!" sighed William victoriously. He had at last completely cured her of flirting.

"Will, dearie!" she called sweetly from the doorway, a moment later. "Did you really mean it when you said—when you said—if papa—you know—if he got too stern—you'd just take me away?"

"Mean it?" asked William, "I meant it as I never meant anything else in all my life!"

He tried to creep softly past Aunt Eunice's door, but she was waiting and stalked boldly forth.

"William Crawford," she said, her eyes gleaming with excitement, "Cousin

Sarah and I have discovered your perfidy!"

"Perfidy!" gasped William, thus rudely roused from Love's reverie.

"Cousin Sarah has learned that you are actively employed in this nefarious campaign that your sensational sheet has been carrying on against innocent victims—more than this, Maria tells me that not only have you been philandering about with members of the disgraceful family in the next house, but that you have actually conspired against Henry. You are of my own blood; I will not turn you into the streets at night, but you must understand that after to-morrow I shall not harbor you longer."

"Wont you be afraid with Uncle Burdick gone?" asked William with deep sarcasm.

"I have telegraphed for Schuyler—I am completely unstrung by the dreadful disclosures of the evening—Good-night."

"Good-night!" William agreed cheerfully, turning on his heel and starting down the stairway; "I'll send for my trunk in the morning."

Two steps from the bottom he stumbled upon something fiendishly soft. A wild, inarticulate yowl rent the air.

"My precious pet!" screamed Aunt Eunice. "Whatever are you doing to my Henry?"

From the fond embrace of the rugs William cursed softly. "I am spraining my ankle on him," he cried aloud, "and if I ever get my hands on him, I'll beat his head off!"

He wrenched the door open violently and limped out into the darkness, Henry rushing gracefully past him. And once more William gave chase.

The morning following, scenes of wildest excitement prevailed in the aldermanic chambers. After a bitter argument Alderman Sulzberger's ordinance providing for the licensing of all New York's cats was defeated by a vote of forty-five to forty.

William limped dejectedly back to *The Evening Earth's* office.

"No," he snapped out in answer to the city editor's question, "the fools voted 'no.'"

"That doesn't bother me any," answered Nicholas coolly; "we're going to start a corking campaign against women's hat-pins next week. But it's up to you, Crawford, to dispose of those cats. It's worse than an escaped menagerie down in the basement and the Asphyxiation bunch refuse to take another bushel of 'em—say their facilities are cramped for two weeks ahead now. You'll have to get rid of those cats!"

"Get rid of 'em!" gasped William.

"That's what I said—get rid of 'em! And before night, too, Crawford; the meat is all gone and the office wont buy any more."

And William went down into an inferno of yowls and had a five dollar talk with the janitor. Late that afternoon a large covered van was backed up to the basement entrance of *The Evening Earth* and for two mortal hours William directed the loading of one thousand, six hundred and forty-two cats into that van. When it was over he climbed to the seat beside the driver, carefully holding a covered basket in his arms.

At the foot of a slip in East River they transferred their squalling, snarling cargo to the decks of a waiting tug boat and then they steamed far, far beyond the purple haze of Sandy Hook.

What happened there will ever remain a frightful nightmare in William's memory with only one bright spot to lighten its lurid gloom. He will never forget the warmth and glow that swept over him the moment when Henry, fifth of his line, dropped, yowling, into the mighty deep.

It was late when William returned; it was later when he read the fair, white note that Leslie's hand had penned early in the evening.

Dearest William,

A perfectly dreadful thing has happened. Papa has found out something. Come at once.

Tired as he was William sighed with rapture and in a trusty taxicab, which he thoughtfully stationed at the corner, sped to her rescue. She was watching for him at an upper window and came down to open the door.



"William Crawford," she said, "Cousin Sarah and I have discovered your perfidy!"

"William," she entreated sobbingly, "you will have to take me away!"

"Don't cry, my darling," breathed William. "Don't cry."

"H-he was so c-cruel," she whimpered. "He said he or I must go!"

"There, there!" William comforted.

"But perhaps you too will be angry," she whispered.

He protested.

She pinned on her hat; she silently handed him her suitcase and taking up her bathing-suit bag she put her arm trustfully in his.

As they were stepping into the cab William stopped.

"I thought I heard something," he muttered.

"I—I didn't," chattered Leslie nervously. "I—I— William, could you love anyone who told even a teeny, little lie?"

"If you were the teeny little liar," sighed William.

"Because, William, I have concealed the same thing from you that I did from papa."

"But I trust you implicitly," answered William proudly. "Why, darling!" he exclaimed, as he caught sight of the bathing-suit bag, "why, didn't you say you had another bundle?"

He adjusted the various luggage so as to leave one strong arm free for her protection.

"I can't give him up—" she murmured, piteously; "I can't!"

"You won't be giving him up," consoled William. He was very, very tired and his ankle pained him hideously, but he spoke soothingly. "He will forgive us soon, you know."

"I don't mean papa," she murmured. "W-William," she said, bravely swallowing her sobs, "when I was a very little girl, a dear, dear friend gave me something for my very own—it was a kitten."

William shivered.

"Go on," he cried, hoarsely.

"It was a m-maltese kitten—she got it from a lady who had its papa from Henry Ward Talmadge—and—and I kept it and papa didn't know it—he thought it was the Burdick lady's because she had one something like Henry—and after all these years I ought to be f-faithful to him!"

A dawning fear began to creep over William's consciousness.

"Where is he?" he hissed.

"In th-that li-little b-bag!" she sobbed.

The bag slipped from William's nerveless grasp.

"Great Scott!" he groaned. "*Do I have to elope with a cat?*"

"What else can we do with him?" she wailed. "We can't desert him!"

For a long moment William was silent. The chug of the wheezy motors punctuated Leslie's sobs; faint sounds of feline

anger were issuing from the bathing-suit bag.

Suddenly William leaned forward to the speaking tube.

"Stop the next empty cab you see," he muttered, hoarsely.

Five minutes later, crossing a silent street the taxi stopped with a bump. William caught up the luggage desperately, jammed a bill into the driver's outstretched fingers, and dragging his hysterical sweetheart roughly behind him leaped agilely into another cab that had stopped beside them.

"Drive fast!" he muttered thickly, for as he glanced backward he saw the former chauffeur holding up a bag, a bag from which protruded a battle-scarred head. William caught the flashing light of the baleful, green eyes.

"Drive fast!" he shouted.

"Where, sir?" gasped the wondering chauffeur.

And William, listening to a long-drawn howl, shrilled wildly:

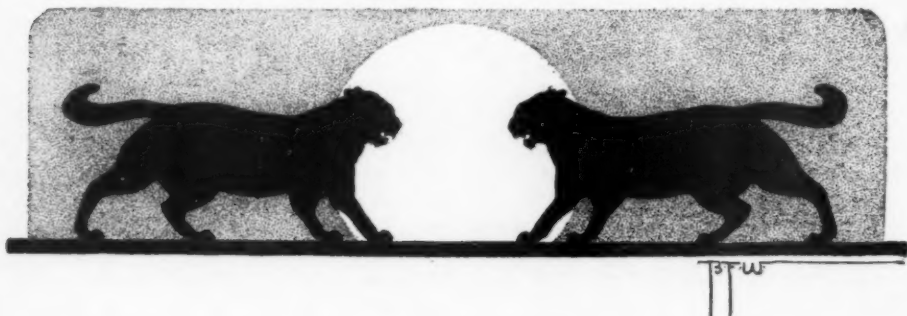
"Anywhere!"

"W-William!" whimpered Leslie, "we've f-forgotten H-Henry!"

And William, jamming her fair head the harder on his weary shoulder waited until the cab had bumped wildly around another corner.

"My darling!" he murmured grimly, "we haven't forgotten him; we couldn't forget him—*We'll never forget him!*"

And William, burying his teeth in a big pink rose on her hat muttered something unintelligible, something that sounded to Leslie like "lamb"—but wasn't!





# The Bay Window

BY ELLIS PARKER BUTLER

Author of "Pigs Is Pigs," "Aunt Coruna," etc.

ON one side of the Fannings' built-by-the-contractor house was the house of Mrs. Whiggin-Plipp; on the other side lived Mr. Gishbaugh in a built-by-the-contractor house exactly like Mr. Fanning's, and on the other side of Mr. Gishbaugh were still other houses, exactly like Mr. Gishbaugh's house. Mr. Fanning's house crowded as far away from the Whiggin-Plipp as it could. It stood almost on the line of Mr. Gishbaugh's property, as if it was afraid of the Whiggin-Plipp house and wanted to get as far away from it as it could. And Mr. Gishbaugh's house, as if it did not like the company of Mr. Fanning's house, crowded as near the line of his next neighbor as it could. But none of the houses stood quite on the line, because all had bay windows, and the houses had to stand back from the line on that account. Otherwise Mr. Fanning's bay window would have been in Mr. Gishbaugh's yard, and that would not have done at all. A bay window should stay at home where it belongs.

The bay windows were all alike. Each had a tin roof on top, and each had nothing at all underneath. Some bay windows have foundations under them, but this is a needless expense. If a bay window is on the tenth floor it would be quite foolish to run the foundation of the house up nine stories so the bay window could sit on it. And if a bay window was on the second floor it would be equally silly to have the foundation climb up merely to hold up the bay window. The bay window, properly made, does not sit at all. It clings to the side of the house like a wasp's nest, and that was the way Mr. Fanning's bay window clung. A dog could walk right under the bay window and lie down. If he wished he could scratch himself, but that is not

an architectural detail—it is human interest. In the delicate foundation wall, just under the line where Mr. Fanning's bay window clung to the house, was a cellar window, and in the cellar, under the window, was the coal bin.

This was unfortunate, because the coal was supposed to be kept in the coal bin, and to get it into it the coal had to be slid through that cellar window, and to slide it into that particular cellar window the coal wagon had to drive onto Mr. Gishbaugh's lawn, and Mr. Gishbaugh had a temper like a live wire on a hot day. The first time Mr. Fanning had a load of coal put in his cellar it happened to be a damp day, and the wheels of the coal wagon made deep, unsightly ruts on Mr. Gishbaugh's dearly beloved lawn. If it had not been a damp day the remarks Mr. Gishbaugh made to Mr. Fanning would have set Mr. Fanning's house afire.

"Very well," said Mr. Fanning, controlling his anger, "if that is the kind of neighbor you are, I'll have my coal carried through my kitchen and down the kitchen stairs and through the wash room and across the cellar and dumped into the bin by hand."

"You can have it carried up a ladder and dumped down the chimney for all I care!" said Mr. Gishbaugh angrily. "But you and your affairs just keep off my lawn!"

That ended that! Mr. Fanning told the Snuffle-sneeze (his maid of all work) not to lend the Gishbaugh's girl any more eggs. It was a regular, red-hot suburban feud. When Mr. Fanning had a telephone put in he absolutely refused to go on a party line with the Gishbaugh, and when Mr. Gishbaugh's evening paper blew over onto Mr. Fanning's lawn Mr. Fanning grabbed it angrily



and took it into the kitchen and burned it! He hoped it might happen to be a night when there was some news in the paper, but it wasn't.

But the evening paper episode made Mr. Gishbaugh all the madder. He prowled around in the evenings, hoping something of Mr. Fanning's would blow over into his yard, so he could take it to the kitchen and burn it, and one Monday one of Mrs. Fanning's handkerchiefs did blow off the clothes line, and Mrs. Gishbaugh pounced upon it and bore it into the house. Whether she burned it was never known, but Mrs. Fanning doubted it. She said Mrs. Gishbaugh was just the sort of fat, impossible creature that would go around rubbing talcum on her red nose with another woman's handkerchief. Hatred raged between the two houses, as you can see. One of the first things the Fanning baby learned was to run, screaming, when he saw a Gishbaugh.

Mr. Fanning was severely scrupulous to keep his possessions off Mr. Gishbaugh's lawn, and Mr. Gishbaugh looked in vain for some cause for a trespass suit, but one day, when he was sitting in his own bay window, he happened to look up. There was a crack in the plaster above his head. He went to the other side of the parlor and got on his hands and knees and sighted along the floor. There was no doubt about it: his wasp-nest bay-window was sagging away from the house. With a smile that was anything but pleasant he went into his yard and looked at Mr. Fanning's bay window. The sight gave him pleasure. Mr. Fanning's bay window was also sagging.

Mr. Fanning was in his own bay window, and he threw up the sash of one of the sides and glared at Mr. Gishbaugh.

"What do you mean, peeking and peering into my house that way?" he asked angrily. "Can't a man have any privacy in his own house?"

"Who is peeking and peering?" asked Mr. Gishbaugh threateningly. "Don't you tell me I am peeking and peering!"

"I just do tell you that!" shouted Mr. Fanning. "Get back where you belong!"

"I'm right where I belong now," said Mr. Gishbaugh. "I'm on my own property, where I have a right to be, and I have a right to stand on my own property and look in any direction I choose. I'll look north, east, south or west, and it's none of your business. Understand that? None of your business! And if you want to know what I'm looking at, I'm looking at your bay window."

"Well, don't look at it!" said Mr. Fanning gruffly.

"I'll look at it until I'm blue in the face, if I wish," said Mr. Gishbaugh, "and I'll tell you what else I'll do. That bay window of yours is breaking loose from your house. The top of it is only a sixteenth of an inch from my property line this minute, and if it sags any more it will be on my property, and I won't have your bay window on my property. Understand?"

"Oh, tut!" said Mr. Fanning. That is one of the most irritating things a man can say to an angry man. It makes light of his anger. "What will you do about it?"

"I'll tell you what I'll do!" said Mr. Gishbaugh, beside himself with rage. "I'll get a saw and I'll saw off every inch of bay window that comes across my property line; that's what I'll do! And if your old wreck of a bay window falls into my yard I'll take it, and I'll chop it to bits, and I'll make a bonfire of it. That's what I'll do!"

And Mr. Fanning saw that he meant it. They were the words of a desperate man. Mr. Fanning stepped back out of his bay window upon the firmer parlor floor. He pulled the heavy mission chair out of the bay window, and put a delicate, little, gold chair in its place. When a window is sagging away from the house and an angry Gishbaugh is standing on the lawn waiting for it to fall in his yard, is no time to have heavy furniture in that bay window. Mr. Fanning called his wife and the Snuffle-sneeze.

"Now, I want you all to keep out of this bay window," he said. "This bay window isn't safe. Any heavy weight in it may tear it loose, and then there is no telling what might happen. Anyone sitting in it might get badly hurt. So

keep out of it. And don't put that heavy chair in it again. Foolish notion, putting bay windows on houses, anyway!"

"If you think the window is going to fall, George," said his wife, "why don't you get some timbers and brace it up underneath?"

"Yes, and have him think I'm afraid of him?" said Mr. Fanning. "Have him think he has scared me?"

"Who?" asked Mrs. Fanning. Perhaps she would have said "Whom?"

"All you have to do is to keep out of that bay window," said Mr. Fanning, for a man is apt to be irritated when his built-by-the-contractor suburban house threatens to fall apart here and there. Not that Mr. Fanning was especially fond of the bay window. But it distressed him to think there was a Gish-baugh waiting to grasp it and hurry it away the moment it fell, and chop it up, and make a bonfire of it. A man wants to keep his own bay windows, however fallen.

That was Saturday and the next day, about three o'clock in the afternoon, Mr. Fanning was sitting on his porch reading section twenty-eight of the Sunday paper when one of the local station cabs drove up and stopped before the house. The horse was an old horse, and when it stopped it leaned forward in the shafts and closed its eyes and panted. The cab was crushed down until the springs were flat, and when the cabman opened the door he had to reach in and pull, to help his fare through the door. Beaming, perspiring, shaking his head good naturedly, Mrs. Fanning's Uncle Ransom, his huge form clad all in white linens, and with a Panama on his head, paid the cabman twice the usual fare. The horse looked around and saw that Uncle Ransom was getting out and not getting in and looked as cheerful as could be expected in a horse of his age and infirmities, and Uncle Ransom turned toward the house, to meet Mrs. Fanning running down the walk, and Mr. Fanning, paper in hand, holding the screen door open. Everyone liked Uncle Rance.

"Why, Uncle!" cried Mrs. Fanning. "Of all the surprises! And such a hot day! I'm so glad to see you!"

"Had to get out to see you"—puff—puff—"Couldn't help coming"—puff—puff—"How's the baby? Could I have a glass of ice water?"

Uncle Ransom always ended his greetings in that way—"Could I have a glass of ice water?" He poured ice water into his mouth and it ran out of the pores of the top of his bald head—a most peculiar anatomical fact. Many stout gentlemen have the same peculiarity. So, as soon as Mr. Fanning had shaken Uncle Rance by the hand, and Mrs. Fanning had hunted up the biggest porch chair for Uncle Rance, Mr. Fanning hurried to the kitchen to make a pitcher of ice water. And that meant emptying the ice tea out of the pitcher first, and then finding the ice pick, and then moving the butter and two heads of lettuce and the milk bottle from the top of the ice cake—but possibly you have made ice water on the spur of the moment too? Then you know all about it. It requires time—and patience.

"Whew!" said Uncle Rance. He took off his coat and his tie and collar. "Hot day, Mary! Whew! I believe it would be cooler inside. The way this sun shines across this porch—"

"Why, yes. Come inside, anyway, Uncle Rance. You have never been in our new house—"

"Huh!" Uncle Rance grunted, with satisfaction, as he put his head in the parlor. "'Tis cooler in here. George getting that ice water? Got a fan? You ought to have an electr— Look at those curtains!"

Dull and dead as the air seemed elsewhere the curtains of the bay window swung in a breeze.

"That's the place for me!" said Uncle Rance. "Right there!"

He walked into the bay window and picked up the dainty gold chair.

"Oh!" exclaimed Mrs. Fanning as Uncle Rance's weight made the floor of the bay window tremble.

"Now! Now! I'm not going to sit on your little gilt toy," said Uncle Rance teasingly. "I'm no featherweight. *That's* the chair for me!"

He laid hands on the heavy, mission chair.

"You—we don't sit in the bay window!" stammered Mrs. Fanning. "We—George doesn't want us to."

"Never you mind George!" said Uncle Rance good naturedly. "I know George. 'Fraid to death of a draft. But it takes a hurricane to get through my fat and chill my bones. Why, I sit in the breeze of an electric fan and—"

"But—" said Mrs. Fanning in distress. You can't tell a dear old Uncle Rance that your bay window is about to fall into a Mr. Gishbaugh's yard. You can't begin to explain that your George has burned Mr. Gishbaugh's evening paper in a fit of rage. You can't begin telling about your new house by explaining that in order to get coal into your own coal bin you have to carry it through the kitchen and down the kitchen stairs. And Uncle Rance looked so blissfully happy, with his shirt sleeves rolled up, and his face raised so the breeze could waft against his three or four chins. "Let George tell him!" thought Mrs. Fanning. "Maybe the bay window isn't sagging, anyway."

Mr. Gishbaugh, however, looking from his side window, saw a man sitting in Mr. Fanning's bay window. Possibly he had no idea there was the least danger of the bay window falling, but he was an irritating man. He loved to irritate Mr. Fanning. He went down cellar and got his step ladder and his saw, and carried them to his lawn. He set the step ladder on the lawn, close to the Fanning's bay window. Then he climbed the step ladder and sat on the top step, and squinted along the edge of Mr. Fanning's bay window. Uncle Rance looked at him curiously.

"What is that fellow doing?" he asked.

"He—he's—George will tell you," said Mrs. Fanning. "He's a neighbor."

"Crack!" It was the bay window. Uncle Rance looked down at the chair he was seated upon. It did not worry Uncle Rance. He was used to having chairs crackle and groan when he sat on them, but Mr. Gishbaugh descended hastily from his ladder. He hurried into the house and brought out his axe and a box of matches. He laid them meaningly on

the grass. He took off his coat and rolled up his sleeves.

"Oh, wont you please come out of the bay window?" pleaded Mrs. Fanning.

"Now, just leave me alone! Just leave me alone!" said Uncle Rance. "I'm all right where I am. George getting that ice water? He isn't making the ice first, is he?"

Mrs. Fanning took the opportunity.

"I'll hurry him," she said, and left the parlor. Mr. Fanning was wiping soft butter off the ice. There was a crash, just as she entered the kitchen, and she stopped short, her face as white as the oilcloth on the shelves. Mr. Fanning paused with the cup-towel in his hand. The first crash was followed by a ripping, rending sound. The house shook.

"The bay window! Uncle Rance! He was sitting in it!" Mrs. Fanning gasped.

"My bay window? That Gishbaugh! He sha'n't have it!" cried Mr. Fanning.

They rushed to the parlor. True enough, the bay window was gone! There, where it had been, was a huge open space—you never know how much wall space a bay window occupies until it has departed—and Uncle Rance was gone too! Mr. Fanning's face hardened. He picked up a bronze bust of Napoleon, the only weapon at hand, and advanced to the opening where the bay window had been. Then he stopped short and stared, wild eyed. There was no bay window on Mr. Gishbaugh's lawn!

Mr. Fanning ran his hand across his brow to make sure he was awake. There was the infernal scoundrel of a Gishbaugh, grinning, but no bay window. Surely he could not have spirited the bay window away in the minute it had taken Mr. Fanning to run from the kitchen to the parlor—and yet—

"Mary!" called a faint voice. It seemed to come from out doors, and it seemed to come from in the house.

"It's Uncle Rance!" Mrs. Fanning cried. "Oh, George! where is he?"

"Oh, Mary! George!" came the voice again.

Mr. Fanning turned and walked through the hall to the cellar stairs. He opened the cellar door.

"Are you there, Uncle Rance?" he called.

"Where do you suppose I am?" asked Uncle Rance, rather peevish'y. "On the roof?"

"Oh, dear! What happened?" asked Mrs. Fanning.

"Happened?" said Uncle Rance. "Happened? What do you suppose happened? Think I brought this bay window down on purpose? Think I wanted to come down and sit on your coal? Come down here, can't you?"

The thing that had happened was the simplest thing in the world. The bay window had merely crushed in a section of the built-by-the-contractor foundation wall, and had slid into the cellar, gently and easily, just as built-by-the-contractor wasp-nest bay windows are apt to slide into cellars.

"Are you coming down, or not?" asked Uncle Rance.

"Coming," said Mr. Fanning.

"Well, bring that ice water when you come," said Uncle Rance.

So Mr. Fanning took the ice water. A man like Uncle Ransom must have his cool drink. They found him sitting on the seat of the chair—it was leather,

well padded—with the bay window beneath him, like a glass boat. He was rather annoyed, to tell the truth.

But Mr. Fanning, when he had given Uncle Rance three tumblers of ice water, climbed to the top of the coal pile. Mr. Gishbaugh was looking into the cellar through the broken wall. Mr. Fanning looked back at him.

"Yah!" said Mr. Fanning scornfully. "Thought you were going to get my bay window! Thought you were going to chop it up! I fooled you! Told you you wouldn't! Yah!"

Mr. Gishbaugh's face grew stern. There was one brick of the foundation wall that Uncle Rance had not brought with him. Mr. Gishbaugh picked it up, and Mr. Fanning ducked. But Mr. Gishbaugh tucked the brick under his arm and walked haughtily away. The brick had been lying on his property.

"You put that down!" shouted Mr. Fanning, to Mr. Gishbaugh.

Uncle Rance swelled angrily.

"I put it down?" he cried. "I did not put it down. It came down, and I came with it. Don't blame me. I didn't want to come down. Give me a glass of ice water."

## The Master Yegg

Solid Ivory Plays The Winning Card

BY JOHN A. MOROSO

Author of "Solid Ivory," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY BERNARD MEEK

Two feet, eight inches South.  
Three feet, four inches West. In the angle.

Joyce.

THE gentleman registered at the St. Regis as Sir Richard Calverly, Bart., read the telegram, tipped the boy an English shilling and locked the door of the reception room of his suite.

He read and re-read the yellow page until the figures were safe in his memory. He then burned the message, powdered

the ashes in his hands and tossed them from a window into the night.

Sir Richard was a tall, slender man, clean shaven and with a long nose, thinning at the nostrils. His mustached upper lip was close to the teeth. While not sunken, his cheeks were flat. His face, verily, seemed scant of flesh.

Dusting his hands one against the other, he strode across the floor to the door of his dressing-room, where his valet sat smoking a cigarette as coolly



as you please. This did not seem to annoy the master.

"Simpson," he said, "I shall be rather busy for a month or more."

"Yes, sir," replied Simpson. "Wot's the job, Guv'nor?"

"A bank, Simpson—rather a large one, I believe."

"'Ere in the city, Guv'nor?"

"So I understand."

"But the h'amateurs 'ave been rough-in' it 'ere, sir," protested the valet. "The bobbies are all watchin' for a big trick, y'know, Guv'nor."

Sir Richard laughed and paced the room, twisting his long fingers together behind his back as he meditated.

"The bobbies, Simpson, are all stupid fellows," he said.

As he chatted, Sir Richard had divested himself of his coat and waistcoat. Collar and tie and shirt quickly followed. Simpson took these and stowed them away in a wardrobe trunk.

"What'll it be now, sir?" asked the valet.

"The Oxford gray walking suit. It will be rather inconspicuous. Then my bowler and the silver-tipped cane. No spats, Simpson; no spats."

"The large Oxford or the small one, Guv'nor?"

"The large one, of course."

Simpson shortly produced a suit which would have fitted a man fifty pounds heavier than his master. Then he brought various pads and a paunch of cotton stuff.

Sir Richard took his time at plastering himself with these false appurtenances. There were swathings for his legs and hips, and pads for his shoulders, besides the stomach piece. Larger and wider shoes than he usually wore were put on his feet.

Finally dressed, he was a bigger man by many inches of girth and breadth than he had been three-quarters of an hour before. But his face was still the same lean and rather distinguished countenance with all of its suggestion of cruel keenness.

"You have fresh quills, have you, Simpson?" he asked, drawlingly.

"Yes, sir; here they are."

The valet produced a little cardboard box, filled with short goose-quills.

The master examined them critically, dusted them with a fine cambric handkerchief, and appeared satisfied with them.

Sir Richard inserted one in each nostril, and, thereupon, his nose, instead of being thin at the edges, became bulbous and red, due to the arrested circulation.

"You have some fresh gum, Simpson?" he asked.

"Yes, sir; here it is."

Sir Richard was handed a box of pasty stuff which he mixed, putty-like, in the palm of one hand. Two balls of this he inserted against the upper teeth and his face straightway became rid of the half-sunken appearance at the cheeks. He was now a fat man instead of a lean one.

The valet, knowing his business, was again ready with two little tufts of false hair. They were fitted by the master in front of each ear and they completed the transformation of a lean, English gentleman into a fat, squire-like person of the middle-class.

The false shoulders, the false stomach, false hips and thighs, the sober Oxford gray suit, the puffed cheeks and changed conformation of the lines about the lips because of the gum on the teeth; the false, smug side-whiskers and the bowler and silver-topped cane made of Sir Richard a person of no vast importance as appearance went.

After a final critical survey of his work he turned to his valet.

"And now, Simpson," he said, "I must drop a few haitches. Then I shall be ready for work."

"What's the lay, Guv'nor?"

"I must become a gentleman's tailor with offices on the second floor of the Anglo-American National Bank. I must get out of here without a shadow at my heels and take another hotel—one less expensive, you see. I shall depart without baggage after you have gone down the fire escape and investigated the suite below us that we have had reserved by cable for the Honorable Mr. Hastings—Russell Hastings. What?"

"Yes, sir."



"In the parlance of these stupid Americans, I shall vamp."

"Yes, sir; and my orders is what?"

"Your orders are to proceed to Montreal. I shall wire you in the code when I want you. Pay the bills."

Simpson, lithe as a cat, slipped from a window after turning out the light in the reception room.

In a few moments he was back.

"The way's clear, Guv'nor," he said.

Sir Richard, despite his added bulk, showed as much activity as his man servant had when he made his way down the fire escape.

If a headquarters man were lurking in the shadows of the corridor on Sir Richard's floor in the hope of picking up his trail he lurked vainly.

The Englishman who had received the telegram signed "Joyce" was off, and away, and so carefully disguised that even Sheridan, "The Man with the Camera Eye," would not have spotted him.

## II

On the second floor of the new building of the Anglo-American National Bank was an exceptionally fine suite of offices, so fine in fact that difficulty was being experienced in securing a tenant. The rental was much higher than any other demanded in that part of Broadway.

The renting agent was contemplating a reduction when along came a gentleman of such affable manner and, withal, of such stupidity that it was palpable an easy mark had arrived to save the day. He was stout, red nosed and English.

The steepness of the rental appeared not to worry him in the least. He said that he was willing to pay any reasonable sum for a suite where he could establish a New York branch of his London gentlemen's tailoring establishment. He was Mr. Anthony Marcus, the same Marcus who, in London, made clothes for everybody who was anybody.

Mr. Marcus made a close study of all the advantages and disadvantages of the suite, pointing out where changes would

have to be made in partitions, and finally agreeing to pay down cash one half-year's rent if he would be permitted to bring in his own architect and builder for the proper remodeling of the place.

The agent closed the deal with delight and went back to his office happy. Mr. Marcus went into the bank and opened an account with a deposit of one thousand pounds cash and checks amounting to as much more. The references he gave the vice-president and manager were of the best.

Mr. Marcus, after receiving his check and deposit books, rented a large safety-deposit box. He was taken into the great vault and seemed highly interested when the manager pointed out its armament.

"Ah, my papers and cash will be safe here surely, y'know," he exclaimed. "You Americans are remarkable people. This is a tremendous piece of work, truly."

The manager modestly admitted that it was and continued in praises of American things in general until Mr. Marcus departed.

The Englishman went to his hotel, the old, gray Astor House. Two men were awaiting him. He shook hands perfunctorily with them and invited them to his rooms. They seemed casual business acquaintances until the door of Mr. Marcus's apartments closed behind them.

Immediately, Mr. Marcus relieved himself of the annoyance of his fake nose by instantly removing the quills and placing them in a small dish filled with an antiseptic wash. The little side-whiskers came off in a jiffy and, with a grunt of pleasure, he shed his coat and waistcoat and began to remove his pads.

"Glad it's cold weather," he commented. "A month of this in Summer would mean the death of me."

Turning to the two men he waved them to seats. They had been standing, respectfully, hat in hand, for they were merely assistants, called in to do the rough work for the master criminal of the twentieth century.

Professional crooks, especially yeggs, seldom envy each other. Those who as soldiers attain real greatness in their line admire their distinguished chieftains.

"Jerry, you're looking fit," said the master considerably to the one of his assistants who was stocky yet unusually long-armed. "Still keeping those great neck and back muscles hard?"

"Yes, sir," replied Jerry.

"And is my friend and associate, Mr. Jimmy Griffin, as quick with his eyes and as keen with his ears as ever?" he inquired blandly, turning to the other.

"Thank you, I am as good as ever," replied Mr. Jimmy Griffin with a laugh. Mr. Griffin was so slender of form that he might almost slide between ordinary prison bars. Even his head was narrow. His eyes were hawk's eyes and his ears were shaped for quick and certain hearing after the manner of the closest hunted of human beings.

"Now, boys," began Marcus, or rather Sir Richard Calverly, for Marcus had melted into the thin English nobleman who had been a guest of the St. Regis only a short while before, "we have a big job on hand and I want you to promise me that neither of you will touch a drop of any strong drink until it is all over and we are safe away."

He turned a pair of cool gray eyes first upon Jerry and then upon Jimmy.

"Do you promise?" he asked.

"I do," they answered in unison.

"Then, here is the game we are to play," announced their master. "I have engaged the second floor of the Anglo-American National Bank. It is to be equipped as a gentleman's tailoring establishment. Under the floor rises the top of the new vault of the bank. We will work downward. Joyce, who worked on the structure of the vault in the plant at Canton, Ohio, reports to me that there are blow-holes in the upper armor. They are large and easy to reach. They are in an angle of the southwest corner of the top of the vault. A little engineering, and we will locate the exact spot on the floor above. Then we will have the suite arranged so that we can work in comfort and take our time. I have the plans of the wiring from one of our electricians. Once inside of the vault we will lift the money to the floor above. We shall then abandon the tailoring business."

The master laughed as if enjoying this sketch of the preliminary work. It was the love and the life of him to beat the law and the police. He could have retired five years before, but the thrill of the game was still in him and, like the gambler who can afford to quit the table or the track, it was another example of the desire for "one more killing" before cashing in for all time.

"And now," he added, "I must work out the floor plan for the changes to be made in the arrangement of the suite. I shall be busy with pencil and paper all afternoon. You boys take in a matinee; don't pick up any acquaintances; keep to yourselves. We will meet to-night at dinner."

### III

The swaggerest "toggerly shop" that ever did business on lower Broadway was that kept by Marcus of London.

While offering the very latest of importations in cloths the new tailor did not raise the prices simply because he was dealing with the rich men of the Stock Exchange and the hundreds of well-to-do professional men quartered in the skyscraper section of the city. He made an instant success. He employed only the best artists of the scissors and needle; he was affable, quick to give credit and decidedly a connoisseur in the matter of clothes.

The handsome suite of rooms for inspection, measuring, and fitting was opened toward the end of October. At the close of November the business was already splendidly profitable. Marcus had advertised alluringly, had not stinted himself in his expenditures to obtain business and, having obtained it, left nothing undone to satisfy his patrons. His was the way of the man bound to make success. His account with the bank on the street level just below rolled up.

Marcus was in the bank frequently on matters of money. Then, too, he made the clothes for the president, the manager, the members of the board of directors and was liberal in his rates for minor officials who could not afford his regular prices, but who preferred to wear



Sir Richard took his time at plastering himself

the sort of clothes that London did.

December came, with its cold winds and rain and snow. Business fell off, naturally, as the patrons of Marcus began to spend their money for Christmas gifts. He laid off half his workmen and his establishment took on shorter hours. The Stock Exchange closed at two o'clock and Marcus at three.

Now, Marcus, the tailor, had a special watchman for his floor. This watchman had keys to the outer door and keys to the suite occupied by his employer. He was a man of stocky build and bunched at the shoulders, suggesting tremendous

back and shoulder muscles. He was taciturn to a degree of sullenness except with the bank's night watchman, whom he seemed to like and who, in time, grew to like him. Jerry was his name. He said that he was not married and that he didn't like women anyhow. The bank's watchman had many an hour off as the result, Watchman Jerry "subbing" for him and turning the key in the automatic record of the rounds which the other watchman should have attended to.

But as friendly as Jerry was with the bank's watchman he never invited him into the suite on the second floor.

"I'd like to," he explained, "but I have my orders and I don't take chances."

Time and again Jerry produced a flask of exceptionally good whiskey for his friend, with a suggestion that it had come from a demijohn kept in the tailoring establishment for the "swells." And time and again Jerry's friend had sampled such offerings and had found them like unto nectar.

Of course, the watchman employed by the bank's burglar insurance company really took no chances. The vault was the most modern made. It was surrounded by steel bars and situated in the center of a great cage. The outer walls were of Harveyized steel and the inner walls were sheathed with cement and iron. The entrance to the surrounding cage was opened by a combination of complex design. Three men were necessary to swing the steel door.

The entrance to the vault proper was a ninety-ton mass of armor, swung on a compound double-goose-crane hinge, carefully balanced on ball and roller bearings so that, once the combinations were solved, the hand of a child might swing it open or shut.

To this vault door there were six tumblers, each with its own lock. The numbers on each tumbler ran from one to one hundred. There were possible one million combinations. No Jimmy Valentine could have opened that ninety-ton door in twenty-four hours.

For each of the six tumblers there were made nightly six combinations and each combination was given to a different trusted man. The time-lock combination was old-fashioned as compared to this intricate mass of machinery.

Human ingenuity had not stopped anywhere—save in guarding against the agents of the yeggs who work in the factories where great vaults are made.

As well guarded as was the wealth of the Anglo-American National Bank there was a weak spot. Just as there have been blow-holes in the armor of great battleships, there were blow-holes in the top layer of armor on this great yegg-proof structure. And the yeggs knew just where they were:

"Two feet, eight inches South. Three feet, four inches West. In the angle."

The man "Joyce" had helped make these air holes and he had charted them and sent in his report to the master of his craft. And so—

The night of December thirtieth found the flooring of the establishment of Marcus, the tailor, ripped up. Three men were at work with powerful fusing blasts and the first air hole had already been opened.

Marcus, in his shirt sleeves, examined the work and referred to the charts in his hands.

"That will do for to-night."

His voice betrayed his satisfaction. He almost laughed in delight and triumph.

Every electric battery providing a means of alarm for the downtown special detective systems was out of business. His own electrician had attended to that.

Only a thin coating of air-puffed steel remained to be fused.

"It's near midnight, boys," he said; "you had better turn in for a good sleep. To-morrow night we finish this job. It is New Year's eve to-morrow night and the street will be packed with a howling, horn-blowing crowd. We may have to blow the inside safes. If we do the noise will not be heard. You could blow up the Brooklyn Bridge to-morrow night and the crowd 'seeing in' the New Year would not hear it or know of it until they read the news in the papers."

The men dropped their tools.

"Everybody sleep here and then beat it after business gets lively to-morrow," directed the master.

Marcus showed each of them to a lounge in various parts of the suite.

"I have some thinking to do," he said as an excuse for not saving a resting place for himself. "Don't worry about me. I'll sleep all to-morrow morning. Jerry will come in at three o'clock and I must talk with him."

#### IV

"Only wine served New Year's Eve."

In hundreds of restaurants, cafés and grills this announcement had stood on





Three men were at work with powerful fusing blasts



the wine lists for a week, proclaiming the Saturnalia which invariably marks the last night of the old year in the metropolis of the New World.

"Engage your tables now."

This was another sign.

And still another, and in this case a more significant sign, was the movement of wagonloads of din-creating horns, clappers and ratchety things, devices fashioned to make hideous the night air and send the old year reeling to its grave while the new came in drunkenwise.

Every man in the police department was on duty for the longest and hardest eight hours of the whole year. Inspector McCafferty had planned his lines of plain-clothes men as well as he could, putting the best of them where the game for the pickpockets would be fattest.

Barney Kellerher had a hundred men sprinkled in the mob of rioting celebrants between Herald Square and the northern limits of Times Square. Jim Tierney, who had had much experience down-town, was given two hundred men to look after the safety of the people filling lower Broadway from Trinity Church to Newspaper Row.

Tierney, who had started out as a detective with the nickname of "Solid Ivory" because of his seeming obtuseness, had gradually come to know the majority of the big crooks—the really able gentlemen who pillage. Also he had come to know much of their devious and sundry ways of cheating the police in the counter game the police played.

Several hundred sneaks and pickpockets, a score of burglars and two score of strong-arm men were safely locked up as suspicious characters, but the highest class of crooks had not been reached. The men with brains enough to pull off big tricks and stay out of jail had found various ways of avoiding the ante-New Year round up. It was a night for big jobs and men capable of carrying them through were roaming the town. Homes were deserted, offices empty and banks unwatched, or guarded only by drunken and sleepy watchmen.

At eleven o'clock the pandemonium about Trinity Church needed only the roar of cannon and the shrieks of factory

and harbor-craft whistles to reach the limit. These aids would come as the solemn old bells of the church low down amid the skyscrapers sounded the first note of the three-quarters preceding the midnight hour.

The street was packed with humanity gone wild with the spirit of Saturnalia—men and women shouting, pushing, jerking at each other, sallying in flying wedges of drunken and half-drunken revelers.

Tierney had taken a position opposite the church and near what is known as the Chimney Corner at the southeast intersection of Wall Street and Broadway, where a tall and narrow building rises like a factory stack.

He paused to peer into the well-lighted Anglo-American National Bank. All was quiet there. He was passing the door to the office entrances above when he came upon a special watchman.

"Hullo," greeted Tierney.

"Hullo," was the response.

"Bank watchman?"

"Watchman for the offices upstairs."

Tierney was studying the man before him. He observed the bull-like neck, the great shoulders and the broad, bunched-up back.

"Move on," commanded the watchman.

"I aint hurting anybody," protested Tierney, keeping his identity to himself.

"Git."

Tierney got.

He drew away into the crowd and soon found a place where he could watch the watchman. To Tierney there was something fascinating about him, that "something" which marks every crook; perhaps it is the personality of the crook. Tierney was the possessor of "the know." It had come in handy before. He had, perhaps, never heard of the phrase, but he was genuinely of the *cognoscenti*.

The first bell of the first-quarter of the midnight chime sounded and then came the roar. Every steam vessel in the two near-by rivers lapping the thin little island of Manhattan started its whistle going in a long blast. Ocean liners uttered their deep bass notes, tugs shrieked, ferryboats grunted, tiny naphtha yachts

shrilled and fireboats yowled their siren songs.

In all the din there came one sound that was strange and unusual—the sound of a buried explosion. To Tierney it suggested holes drilled in steel, the holes filled with “juice,” the safe packed over with rugs and carpets and three or four men waiting in corners with handbags open.

way. They saw their lieutenant and gathered beside him.

“Something’s doin’,” whispered Tierney. “I’m glad you came. Get your whistles ready. If there’s any trouble don’t shoot until the other fellow pulls a gun. Use your locusts.”

“What is it?” asked Murphy.

“I think I heard an explosion,” Tierney replied. “That watchman over there



“Move on,” commanded the watchman

The special watchman was still at the door.

A fat, smug, English-looking person showed his face and form in the shadows of the entrance for a moment and, after a word to the watchman, disappeared. But he did not disappear in the crowd. He fell back into the shadows of the entrance.

O'Brien, Murphy and Alvano, plain-clothes men under Tierney, had gradually closed about Wall Street and Broad-

may be a phony. He may be a lookout. There are people upstairs in the bank building and there are no lights.”

There appeared a thinness in the streams passing up and down the sidewalk and the adjoining curb. A car clanged by, the motorman clanging his ear-torturing gong as much by way of contribution to the general din as to warn the crowds in the street.

“When’d you see him?” asked Alvano.

“Minute ago,” replied Tierney.

"Anybody else?" pursued O'Brien.

"A big guy had a word with him, then dodged back. There's something doin'," Tierney assured them.

The revelers packing about them were wielding long-handled feather brushes, called "ticklers." Some of the more devilish of them had sprinkled them with snuff or pepper.

Those who got the benefit of this device swore with weeping eyes and many sneezes. Tierney was coughing and cursing to himself.

The last stroke of midnight had struck and the shrieking whistles and blaring of horns were becoming fainter.

The fat, English-looking person came to the door again. Behind him showed two men, each carrying two dress-suit cases. With a sign to his men to follow, Tierney moved upon the suspected party. Tierney was within a foot of the fat man when there rolled upon them a wave of snuff and pepper. The fat man's face became distorted. Then came a mighty sneeze and two little objects struck Tierney on the chest. The detective perceived instantly that something had been blown from the nose of the man he was watching and perceived too, that instead of being bulbous as before, the man's nose was now long, and very thin at the nostrils.

Tierney had seen that long, thin nose on many a high-class crook.

The detective knew that there would be a struggle. His silver whistle was already between his teeth. He sounded it with all the force of his bellows-like lungs.

The men in the doorway jumped back into the shadow like a bunch of terrified rats.

Keenly into the great volume of sound on the streets and in the air cut the high-pitched, trilling whistle of the police. Three other whistles joined it and through the surging mob of people plain-clothes men began to batter their way, slugging, clawing, elbowing, giving the knee and heel as they hurried on in answer to the call of comrades for help.

Tierney's gun was in his hand. He raised it and stepped into the doorway.

"The first one of you that moves gets his head blown off," he shouted.

He reached with his left hand and grabbed the fat, English person.

With a mighty yank he dragged him out and thrust him into Murphy's arms.

"Hold fast to him, Murphy," was his curt order. The two men with the grips were then dragged out and turned over to O'Brien and Alvano.

The bad man of the crowd, the special watchman, or lookout, was yet to be taken. Tierney knew that he had a gun and a night stick.

"Come out, old feller; I don't want to hurt you," called Tierney, enticingly.

The only answer was the sound of footsteps shifting softly on the tiled floor.

Tierney flashed a pocket electric lamp with his left hand and pressed the button.

There was a rush from the dark and down went the detective. Tierney's gun clattered on the tiles. He grabbed for a leg of his assailant and got it.

*Bang!*

Down came the butt of the watchman's pistol on the top of Tierney's head. A great fountain of stars and white and yellow spangles exploded before his eyes.

"Gug!" came from Tierney's lips and he rolled over unconscious.

But the whistles had been answered and the lookout, with all his great strength, could not buck the line that faced him outside. He went down in the gay, drunken mob at its Saturnalia, fighting like a wildcat, but hopelessly.

When Tierney was brought back to life an hour later, he was in the Hudson Street Hospital with a headache which was the prize headache of all the thousands in Manhattan that New Year's morning.

Inspector McCafferty had been pulled out of bed, and, after looking over the wreckage of the yegg-proof vault and turning over the \$200,000 of loot to bank officials, had hurried to the hospital to inquire about his man.

Tierney heard McCafferty mumbling something about his condition when he opened his eyes.

## THE MASTER YEGG

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"Hullo, Boss," he piped. "What happened?"

"Oh, nothing much," replied the inspector with pleasant sarcasm. "You only landed the master yegg of this country and England."

"The doctor says your bean's all right; it aint broken."

It was Tierney's turn to grin.

"Break that knob?" he asked. "Solid Ivory would lose his reputation if it *did* crack, Boss."



"The first one of you that moves gets his head blown off"

"Yes?" asked Tierney, fumbling at the bandage on his head.

"Do you suffer much?" his chief asked.

Tierney winced.

"It must have been an awful wallop he gave me."

"Well, I must be going, Jim," McCafferty said. "Let me know what I can do for you."

"Send word to the old mother that I've gone out of town for a couple of days," said Tierney. "And a happy New Year to you."



# Princess Natasha

BY RALPH BERGENGREN

Author of "The Gay Old Man," etc

THE window of the restaurant looked out on Broadway, and Colonel Cadogan nearly committed the undignified act of rubbing his British nose against the pane as he stared after a passing figure. He had been a week in New York, his first visit to this side of the water and the first time I had seen him since the 'eighties when circumstances had thrown us pleasantly together in St. Petersburg.

"You seem interested in my friend Lehmann," I remarked carelessly.

"Lehmann?" The colonel straightened up and looked at me thoughtfully.

"The man who just passed. An artist."

"Ah! Then you know him. I was mistaken. When we were in Petersburg, Grahame—of course you remember Count Leopold Aussig-Wehstein?"

"Not very distinctly. An *attaché*, wasn't he?"

"From Austria. Then you really *don't* remember him?"

"I'm afraid not. I remember the name. I seem to remember that something happened to him soon after I left Petersburg."

"He is supposed to have died," said the colonel. "I have never been certain and I have looked for him, these twenty-five years, wherever chance has taken me. I wonder—" He paused, frowning to himself as he cut the end of his cigar, and then smiled cordially at me across the table. "It will do no harm to tell you why I am looking for him, Grahame, and perhaps, sooner or later, you may run across something that will enable you to help me."

"One never knows what may happen," I said. "Nothing would suit me better than to be of assistance."

"Leopold and I," began the colonel, lighting his cigar and absently watching the life of the city as it flowed past the window, "were the two youngest military *attachés* that season in St. Petersburg—the year when I had the pleasure of making your acquaintance. We had already gone through the Turco-Russian war together. Although we had not saved each other's life, we had borrowed from each other's wardrobe—which, after all, brings men nearer together. And, like everybody else who knew her, we both admired the youngest princess of the Bergenoff family—Natasha. You may remember her brother, Prince Louis Bergenoff?"

"I remember *him*. The chap they called 'velvet-fingered.'"

"Exactly—polite, capable, and cruel. When I say admired, I mean of course in the way in which any man may admire an unusually attractive woman. It was generally understood that the Princess Natasha was to marry a certain wealthy noble of whom the less said the better. His wealth was more desirable than his reputation—and the match, we suspected, was of Louis' making and just the sort of thing that might have been expected of him. Nevertheless we saw much of the princess. Louis, also in the service, saw fit to be intimate with us, doubtless for his own purposes—which later events prevented him from uncovering. He invited us frequently to his house in Petersburg, and when, in mid-winter, Leopold was unexpectedly summoned back to Vienna, I continued those visits. I think the princess liked me. For my own part Petersburg became a dull and uninteresting city when summer carried the Bergenoffs to their country estate near Ohrenburg. Spring had



passed without Leopold's return to Russia and time hung heavy.

"Early in August Prince Louis wrote inviting me to visit them. Little as I liked Louis himself, you can imagine that I decided to stand him for the sake of his sister. I wanted to see her, Grahame—more perhaps than I have ever wanted to see anybody else. And yet I was not in love with her. That seemed too much out of the question, but the fact that it did seem out of the question proves, at this distance, that the intangible something that turns friendship into love was left out of the equation. Simply I wanted to see her, and talk to her, and listen to her music—for she was an admirable musician, a charming woman, who seemed really happy only at the piano. There she forgot herself, her brother, and that accursed noble whom, some day, she was going to marry. Naturally I wrote an immediate acceptance and a few days later Louis himself met me at the nearest station and drove me out to the castle. We could see the tower for miles along the little stream that bordered the road from Ohrenburg.

"When I came down that evening into the great candle-lit banquet hall, the first guest I recognized was Count Leopold. He nodded gaily enough from the far end of the table—but his appearance surprised and distressed me. He was thinner and paler than when he left Petersburg and his eyes were feverish. Later in the evening he told me that he had returned to the capitol just in time to find the prince's invitation—Bergenoff, for some reason, had evidently known that the count was to be in St. Petersburg—and had come straight to Ohrenburg, bringing his horses and man with him. What Bergenoff did not know, I imagine, was that Leopold had resigned from the service and had come back to Russia as his own man.

"Meantime we amused ourselves. The next morning we drove—there were perhaps a dozen guests in the castle—some fifteen or twenty miles across the steppes to witness a hunt for wild horses. I had the honor, somewhat to my surprise, of

driving with the princess in an English tandem that had been put at my disposal. The vehicles, for Prince Louis had quite a collection, and nearly every contemporary type was included in it, strung out in a gay procession, in the midst of which Natasha and I were almost as much alone as in her own music room. Gaiety was before and behind us. We talked of music, poetry and life itself—for one talked seriously with the Princess Natasha and yet hardly realized it. Even now I remember her slow, mysterious smile as I spoke my mind on the fatalism of her countrymen—especially as the poet Lermontoff has expressed it in her own favorite quotation: 'Sleep! God will keep watch and ward for you.' It sounds well in quotation—but Russia has been sleeping in just that spirit for too many centuries.

"'How else shall one live?' she said gently. 'If one can sleep without bad dreams one is happy. Do you, Colonel Cadogan, know of any country where a woman of my rank is actually free to live her life according to her own desires?'

"'No,' I replied honestly. 'It is only by leaving your rank behind you, Princess, that you would find the life of a woman in any other country materially different from the one you lead here in Russia.'

"'That is it,' she replied, and again her smile puzzled me. 'Only by leaving my rank behind me.'

"We reached the castle in time to dress and dine at the usual hour. How lovely she looked that night!—all in white, and her dark eyes smiling in their depths with that same slow, mysterious light of triumph. Except for her own beauty her only adornment was the string of pearls wound round her arms and neck—her entire personal fortune.

"Dinner, cards and music got rid of the evening. It was midnight when the men were left to themselves in the smoking room, and I had just decided to follow Count Leopold to his own quarters when the prince suggested that I might like a glimpse of the steppes by moonlight. He was my host and I fell in with the proposal; the prince picked up

the cane that he invariably carried and we went out together. For my own part, as I thought to myself, I have little use for a man who feels the need of carrying a sword-cane on his own premises.

"We went out, as I say, together, down a narrow path toward the river. The night was cloudy, a full moon now and then coming into its own between masses of drifting cloud. The castle lay behind us, and the prince, linking his arm in mine, amused me by a jocular narrative of the legends connected with it; lightly as he spoke I could see he was proud of them, although some were not episodes to be particularly proud of.

"These dead and gone grandmothers of mine," the prince was saying, 'were very much alive at one period. They, too, had their own little pleasures. Natasha knows more about the old castle than I do—but there are some phases that she does not care to talk about. Now, if you will look straight ahead,' he added, turning me about and pointing with his cigarette, 'you will presently make out the outline of a tower ending at the top in a Byzantine dome. Apparently that tower has no egress, but my grandmothers knew differently. One large window opens with a spring, slides into the masonry—and admits visitors. An excellent arrangement—in a legend; and, nevertheless, the Bergenoffs were always careful of the reputation of their women.'

"We stood a moment looking at the black tower, and even now I can remember the sound of the tree branches waving monotonously in the wind and the murmur of the river behind us. Then Louis uttered a short, surprised whistle; I felt his fingers tighten on my arm and then release it suddenly. Against the blackness of the ancient masonry we both stood staring at a dim, moving light, or rather a distant illumination, which advanced toward us from within the tower. I guessed quickly that there must be a window with a long corridor behind it and that somebody was coming along the corridor with a candle. But Louis was already moving toward the tower, stepping cautiously, and I could do nothing but follow. Then we

stopped and waited—as perhaps other men, in the past, had paused and watched a light in the old corridor. And, as may well have happened many times in the dead history of the Bergenoff castle, a narrow line of light appeared and widened in the seemingly solid masonry.

"The secret door opened. It framed the figure of Princess Natasha, still in her white dinner dress and wearing her string of pearls. The light fell on her bare shoulders as she peered out into the dark shrubbery. And from that shrubbery rose a man's figure, silhouetted against the flickering light of the candle. Evidently there were no steps, for he swung himself into the opening and took the Princess impulsively in his arms, his back still toward us. Leaning over his shoulder Princess Natasha touched a spring and the wall began to resume its usual appearance of unbroken solidity.

"But hardly was the door in motion before Prince Louis sprang forward, roaring his sister's name in a tone of fury. Steel flashed in the moonlight as his sword came out of its unsuspecting looking scabbard. Before the door could close he was through the opening and had driven the thin blade, twice in succession, into the back of his sister's lover. Then the door closed. I found myself pounding helplessly against a solid wall. I heard Natasha's voice cry out in one long strain of agony—and then a complete and heavy silence.

"Like so much else in Russia the awful incident seemed to be buried forever in that silence—a life's tragedy accomplished and covered up in less than five minutes. I remained stupefied, and the light of the candle disappeared down the corridor. Truly, there was nothing for me to do but find my way back to my own quarters. Half an hour later Prince Louis sent to ask if I was comfortable for the night. That was all—a polite inquiry for a guest's comfort. I sent back word that I was quite comfortable.

"Comfortable! I tried to compose myself, but within the hour I was creeping down stairs and slowly feeling my way

around the house toward the garden beside the tower. I did not know what I might find—but I had to be doing something. The murmur of the stream guided me. Presently I felt sure I was in one of the little paved alleys of the garden for my feet crunched on the gravel. Then I stopped short—and I am willing to confess that I stood trembling at the sight of a vague, white figure only a little way in advance of me. But I made myself go toward it. The whiteness took on human outlines; it swayed; it rose and fell, and I heard a human sound of difficult breathing as of a person exhausted by physical effort.

"'Princess,' I called softly—and then again, 'Princess Natasha.'

"'Who is it?' The figure stood erect and looked toward me. Lying at her feet I could now see the dark mass of something that she had been trying to drag to the river.

"'Philip Cadogan,' I replied gently. 'Can I help you? I was with the prince—'

"'You were with Louis!' she echoed. 'Then you saw—' She pointed down at the huddled body in the path with her finger. 'Louis Ivanovitch has killed him,' she went on in a dull voice. 'He thought to fasten me in the Blue Boudoir, but there are too many ways of getting in and out of this old house. I know them better than he does. He sold me to the duke, sold me for money to pay his debts. Believe me, Colonel, this is the first time I have ever met my lover'—she said the word proudly, lingering over it—'the first time I have ever met my lover alone. All the year we have had stolen meetings in crowds—at balls, at the opera, at the Countess Samaroff's—and in letters. But we had never been alone together. I promised to decide today whether I would go away with him, leaving my rank behind because I loved him. I told him to meet me here at the old door for my decision. Now I have made it. Louis has killed him—but we are going away together. Come, my friend, and help me carry him to the river.'

"I stooped over the body. It seemed to me that there was still a spark of life

in it—but I wished to get away from the grim wall of the castle. The river was not far distant, and so, together, Natasha and I carried our burden until the water lapped against the bank at our feet. Then we laid it gently down, and Natasha, slipping to the ground, took his head in her lap.

"'I am not sure—' I said. 'Shall I examine?' Kneeling, I lit a match and held it over the white face, staring until the flame burnt my finger. For the face was that of my friend Count Leopold. Stupid as I was, I had not even suspected.

"'Did you not know?' whispered Natasha. 'We were afraid that everybody would guess.'

"'Hold the matches, Princess,' I said, and handed her my match box. The mind works curiously under the strain of the unexpected: I remember now that I warned her not to burn her fingers. Then I set myself to examining Leopold's wounds while the princess obediently lighted match after match and held them where I directed. The moon came out and the matches were no longer necessary. Leopold still lived. I washed his wounds as best I could with water from the river and bandaged them with strips of the princess' petticoat. And all the while my mind was busy with the question—what would become of them, this man and woman who were both my friends and for whom life in Russia was no longer possible?

"We had brought him, following the gravelly path, to a small landing. The prince used it for pleasure excursions and a small boat was fastened there tugging at its painter as the current dragged it toward Ohrenburg. I was still fastening the last of the bandages when I looked up and saw the princess drawing the boat beside the landing. She answered my question before I could ask it.

"'We must go,' she said quickly. 'We must go at once. We must be far away by daylight. If you will help me lift him into the boat—you know I can row and I know the river—I know places where a boat can hide and nobody will think of looking for it. You will help

me, wont you, Colonel? And you see—we must be away—before daylight comes and—'

"Knowing Prince Louis, there was no denying that statement.

"'Anything I can do, Princess, I will do,' I replied earnestly.

"'If you will help me lift Leopold,' she answered, 'and then, if you will get word to his servant to ride at once, along the road to Ohrenburg. I shall manage to communicate with him from the river—'

"And I saw she was right. There was nothing more I could do, willingly as I would have gone with them. Leopold stirred and opened his eyes vaguely as I lifted him into the boat—and then Natasha took the oars and the little craft crept into the shadow of the bank and started toward the city. So far as is known I am the last person who ever saw them. An hour afterward, however, I had the satisfaction of seeing Leopold's man also take the road toward Ohrenburg. He appeared an intelligent fellow, and desperate as the case seemed, I was not altogether without hope that with his aid there was still a chance for Natasha and her all but dying lover.

"Later, when the Embassy, at my instigation, tried to get further information about the night's work, Prince Louis was able to show that the count, his servant, and his horses had gone away together after a few days' visit. There the matter ended. It was later given out in St. Petersburg that the Princess Natasha was seriously ill at Ohrenburg and she is generally supposed to have died there. You know how those things are in Russia. The word of a man in Bergen-off's position is never questioned and whatever information he gives out concerning his family affairs is accepted without further inquiry.

"You see, now, why I was startled by

the appearance of your friend Lehmann. Leopold, among other accomplishments, was something of a painter."

"And Lehmann," I replied after a moment, "has a very attractive wife who is an accomplished musician and whom I have often thought to be Russian. Would you care to meet them?"

They met the next evening, and I knew by Colonel Cadogan's expression that he recognized the elderly German servant who opened the door for us at the Lehmanns' small studio flat. Herr Lehmann was out and Madame Lehmann alone in the studio.

"Mr. Grahame knows that he is always welcome," she said, holding out her hand cordially, "and all Englishmen have a claim on my heart." Then as she turned directly to my companion, her dark, expressive eyes changed from cordiality to wonder. "Colonel Philip!" she exclaimed breathlessly. "Is it Colonel Philip?"

"After many years, Princess." Colonel Cadogan bowed over her hand, but she took both of his in her warm grasp. "I saw the count on the street. I hope I have not been indiscreet in recognizing him."

"No, thank God! Not in America. But you once told me, don't you remember, that to gain freedom I must leave rank behind me. Ah! We have so much to talk over." She stopped. "I hear Leopold at the door. We will surprise him—so happily!" And as Herr Lehmann entered, laying aside his familiar soft hat, she ran to him like a girl, put her hands over his eyes, and asked eagerly: "Leopold, can you guess who is here? Look far back in our youth and tell me—whom you would like best to see of all we have known?"

And without hesitation he replied, "Philip Cadogan."





Miss Ruddy, guarding her plate and fork, towered above him

## Perambulator Perkins

BY RAYMOND LEE HARRIMAN

Author of "The Third Proposal," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY WILBUR G. KURTZ

I

MRS. RUDDY surveyed his advance from the back steps. He was a shop-worn little man, but he had, nevertheless, a valiant air as he trundled a baby-carriage piled with tin-ware into the yard. Mrs. Ruddy's disapproval was immediate. She was suspicious of the straw hat in November, and of the baggy trousers—trousers so baggy that anyone might suspect their original identification with a larger man—that flopped quaintly about his stubby legs. Unique-

ness of humankind always aroused Mrs. Ruddy's distrust.

"I don't want nothin'," she called. "You git!"

The perambulator came nearer and its motive power bowed in a most friendly way.

"You git!" ruffled Mrs. Ruddy.

Still nearer trod the peddler. The tin-ware glinted exasperatingly in the late autumn sun.

"You git!" hissed Mrs. Ruddy.

And he smiled—a crooked, puckery, little smile.



"Madam," he began, now that he was within conversational distance, "I will detain you but a few minutes. I am known as Perambulator Perkins. My tin-ware is lightening woman's burden from Cape Cod to the Golden Gate."

As a matter of fact he had never been outside of New England, but folks will have their figures of speech.

"No dish-pan never made my burden lighter," snorted Mrs. Ruddy, buxomly. "Nor no other woman's neither. Huh!"

Perkins evaded argument with an ambiguous, marionette-like gesture, and quickly brought forth from his shining wares an egg-beater.

"Triple-action and ball-bearing," he declaimed in a tone of wonder, holding it aloft. "It's a miraculous piece of machinery."

He cracked an imaginary egg into an imaginary bowl and beat it to an imaginary frazzle. He was a *virtuoso* in the art of persuasion.

"I don't see," Perkins reflected audibly, "how anybody could make a good, first-class custard pie without this triple-action, ball-bear—"

"Huh!" grunted the customer in prospect. "I got a custard pie in my buttery that don't have to take no back talk from nobody's cookin'. And it wa'n't put together with no triple-extract sort o' what-yer-call-'em egg-beater neither."

"Well," admitted Perkins, "it might be so. But—"

"I kin prove it," said Mrs. Ruddy, shrewdly, "by swappin' you a piece for that there triple-bearing, ball-action thing."

"And fifteen cents to boot," added Perkins, promptly, "to make the sale bona-fide."

A well-nourished infant wail came from within the house.

"You set on the steps," commanded she, and disappeared inside.

Presently the infant wail was stilled; Mrs. Ruddy reappeared with pie and money and the sale was consummated. Perkins curled up on the steps and ate slowly, with all the signs of giving his palate a prolonged pleasure. Mrs. Ruddy, guarding her plate and fork, towered above him like the Statue of Liberty

holding sway over New York harbor. She gave him a searching scrutiny much as one might examine a half-dollar that didn't ring true.

"Are you reliable?" she asked, abruptly.

"Guaranteed," said Perkins, absently, pursuing a vagrant crumb around the plate. "My tin-ware—"

"Didn't say nothin' about tin-ware," she interrupted. "I'm talkin' about you—whether you have a good Christian character or not."

Perkins chuckled in a puzzled sort of way, arose, and placing the empty plate upon the top step, brushed the non-existent crumbs from his coat.

"Set down," said Mrs. Ruddy. "There's somethin' I want to talk to you about."

Never did Perkins forget this hour, when he and Mrs. Ruddy sat on her back steps and the woman tempted him.

"I s'pose there'll always be widders," she began; "leastwise I always expect to be one. Since the Lord seen fit to call Albert—that's Mr. Ruddy—to pastures new, why I don't see no sense o' complainin'. Let those mourn who's got time to mourn, I say; but when there's labor to be done in the vineyard widders must put aside their grief and git on the job."

Perkins nodded absently. His present interest was in locating a lodging for the night.

"Albert has been gone a year," sighed Mrs. Ruddy.

"You don't say," murmured Perkins. He saw no connection between Albert and himself.

"Well, anyhow, I've gone and took a good load o' responsibility for a widder. No one can say Annie Ruddy aint tackled her duty as she seen it. When Albert went away he left me and the grocery-store and Leopold—that's the baby. It's three blocks down the street, the store is. Turn to the left for one block—and there it is on the corner. Anyone can see it that wants to walk by."

Perkins fidgeted. Having disposed of the egg-beater, and there being no prospects of further sale, why detain him?

"If trouble is the lot o' widders, I got

it," continued she. "Everything is upset. The darlin' little critter has to be taken care of and git his baby food regular; and there's housework—nobody can say Annie Ruddy's house aint the spickest and spannest in town—and down to the store things is all goin' to smash."

"Aint business good?" asked Perkins, who had some interest in trade conditions.

"'T aint bad business: it's good-for-nothin' men. I've had terrible poor luck with all my hired clerks. One, he had a sweet tuth and et gallons o' crackers and molasses; 'nother, he was continually in love and never was happy less he was carvin' cupid hearts all over the fixtures with the cheese knife. Not to mention lover-knots and twined initials. And the last one I had nearly dreened the business to death because he couldn't make change. He got his walkin'-papers yestiddy. Now I'm lookin' for some one that aint got a sweet tuth and who can subtrack a bar o' soap from a dime and who hates females."

"Gits kind o' chilly nights, long about now," observed Perkins, blowing his fingers.

This remark indicated the psychological moment to Mrs. Ruddy. She seized it.

"Winter's pretty clost to hand now. I sh'd think it was'n't no fun to shove that baby-carriage through six or seven feet o' snow, besides draggin' yourself along after it. And I tell you when it snows around these parts it *snows*. We have wallop in' winters. I sh'd think you'd ruther stop over durin' the cold spell and work stiddy at somethin'—which is what I am gittin' at. There's that job down to the store and I'm offerin' it to you, smack out o' the box and you can go to work to-morrer. Leastwise you'd have a stove to keep you snug and warm."

"I—I—I'm much obliged," stammered Perkins, "but I guess—"

"The pay's eight dollars a week," said Mrs. Ruddy, generously.

Perkins arose and sidled toward the carriage. For all his itinerant ways he was a conservative man. He wasn't ready

to accept any new and unknown kind of employment which might be thrust upon him. A plausible excuse came to mind.

"I'm much obliged, but I dunno's it's wise to change my occupation with all this tin on my hands."

"You can put it in the winder, and keep it there till it's all sold. 'T wont take no time to sell it down to the store. Chances like this don't come every day in the week. And me not knowin' about you, either—'cept that you look fairly honest. Seems to me, *I'm* the one that's takin' chances; even if I am a pretty good judge o' human nature."

"I dunno," pondered Perkins. "I dunno, I hadn't aimed to settle down clerkin' this winter. This is somewhat sudden."

"Human circumstances is always sudden," said Mrs. Ruddy. "You have to count on that or you're likely to git left."

"Oh! I aint sayin' 's I wont," he wavered, for he was beginning to weigh the advantages of a warm, well-provided winter. "You see it's peculiar: I tried to settle down three or four times before. Once 't was on a farm and once in a shoe factory and once in a plumber's shop and—u-u-m! I dunno. Seems queer—sort o' fateful, seems to me. No matter what's done I always finally end it up by pokin' off again on the road. Seems kind o' written in the stars that I got to keep a movin' whether I want to or not. 'T aint any wonder I sort o' hesitate, is it?"

"When you goin' to find out?" demanded Mrs. Ruddy. "I can't stand out here a-shiverin' and gettin' my death o' cold."

"Tell you what I *will* do," Perkins surrendered, with the air of a man who swaps jack-knives against his good sense. "I'll try it. I'll just go to work and see how things come out; wont say I'll stay—and I wont say I wont. How's that?"

"All right," said Mrs. Ruddy. "You can git good accommodations down to Mary Susan Eldredge's. Her house is right acrost from the store. She sets a good table and she's neat. She's a maiden lady and tell her who you be and I sent you. Wheel your tin stuff in the shed back there if you want to. Nobody'll harm it."

Mrs. Ruddy marched into the house,



The door swung open and Mrs. Ruddy, at the threshold, commanded the situation

and Perkins, after stowing his wares safely in her shed, set out in the chilly dusk to Mary Susan Eldredge's.

Lamplighting time had come in the little town, and as he trudged past the twinkling cottages, he wondered, in a bewildered sort of way, whether the people who sat around the lamps at supper would be friendly to him—a wayfarer who for better or for worse had stopped suddenly on his journey to become a fellow townsman.

## II

It was warm and cozy in Mary Susan's kitchen. The other boarders had gone and they had it all to themselves. Perkins had long since finished his noon dinner and was due at the store. As a sign of good intentions he put on his overcoat and sank back into a friendly rocking chair. Mary Susan was just taking some brown, crusty loaves of bread from the oven. They smelled nice. Sort

of nutty, you know. It was very interesting in Mary Susan's kitchen, too. They were talking about Perkin's situation at the store. Was it a good thing for him? Were the future prospects good? The old, old perplexity of getting ahead. Mary Susan was fine to talk to. A sort of understanding person who knew all about the little scrabbly spots in life.

"I don't see's you sh'd gallop right back to the store soon's you swallow your victuals," she observed. "Man's entitled to a noon-hour, I sh'd say."

"Course he is," said Perkins, reaching, however, for his cap and mittens on the window sill. He had an uneasy sense of the impending. Perkins was psychic in Mrs. Ruddy's direction.

Mary Susan emptied the bread on the table to cool and chose another rocking chair for herself. The true New England kitchen abounds in rockers. She had a prim, cheerful way of rocking, like a bird on a branch.

"And what's more," she went on, "you

ought to get more pay. You've been a good, reliable man to Annie Ruddy for goin' on six months. She ought to treat you more liberal. You ought to do something about it—stick up for your rights. You need to be more backbone, I say—kind of spry-like in gettin' ahead."

Perkins acknowledged the advice with a thoughtful nod. This warmth of feeling for what was due him swelled the seeds of his discontent. He had his grievances.

There was the tin-ware, for instance. Mrs. Ruddy had not allowed it to remain in the store window until all sold. The display had lasted only two weeks, when she relegated it to the back shelves in favor of a new-fangled cereal. And Leopold had the baby carriage, Leopold, the son and heir. Mrs. Ruddy had impressed the vehicle into his service immediately. He was a stolid infant of two years who seemed to enjoy a state of silent precociousness, and he took this accession to luxury with a temperamental lack of enthusiasm. Worse still, his mother had lately got the habit of entrusting him to Perkins' care at the store while she was at home busied with housework.

Perkins was, indeed, a good and faithful servant. Mrs. Ruddy kept a sharp eye on the till—and Perkins did the rest. The penny details of her grocery store found a true affinity in his nature. From 6:30 in the morning until 9 o'clock at night, with very little time out for meals, he industriously supplied the community with its necessities. His cheerful, plodding little self was welcomed by the neighborhood in the friendliest of terms. Wives and husbands and dogs and cats and boys and girls and horses and canary birds—all responded to him with a sort of fellow-feeling. And there was Mary Susan, the friendliest friend of all.

"You're the most sympathetic woman I ever did see," murmured Perkins. This tribute was an extraordinary impulse toward sentiment. He blushed until his little face reddened like a cranberry. "I appreciate it. You got real feelin', seems to me."

He gazed out the window at the big, mushy snow flakes which were dawdling

down. To face those kind eyes of Mary Susan which he knew were twinkling at him was too great an ordeal. They were sharing a sincere, intimate moment and Perkins had had too few of these in his life to accept this in anything but a happy embarrassment.

The clock in the next room chimed two. Perkins hopped to his feet and pulled on his mittens. The sense of the impending was uppermost once more.

"You tell Annie to-day that you want a raise," persisted Mary Susan, rocking briskly. "There's no time like the present, I say. Tell her—"

A loud knock hammered at the door. Perkins instantly visualized a red, powerful row of knuckles. There was no time for a "come in." The door swung open and Mrs. Ruddy at the threshold commanded the situation.

"I run over to see whether Mr. Perkins is goin' to put up them orders or not."

Perkins pulled his cap down over his ears.

"I said, 'Is he or not?'"

With a military right-about-face, Mrs. Ruddy turned and marched out. Perkins trailed along. And in her warm, cozy kitchen, Mary Susan still rocked in placid comfort.

The afternoon at the store was a busy one and offered no opportunity for a conference regarding an increase in wages. That evening, however, at closing up time, provided the crucial moment to grapple with the issue. The two were alone. Perkins was putting up sugar and Mrs. Ruddy was at the till, counting the day's cash.

"Do you recollect," asked Perkins in an innocent conversational tone, "I been here goin' on six months?"

Mrs. Ruddy was thumbing over a wad of soiled bills. She nodded and went on counting.

"And it seems to me—" holding the scoop poised over the scale "—it *does* seem to me that trade has picked up since I come."

"Huh!" said Mrs. Ruddy, instantly on guard.

"And it seems to me—" flicking a grain or two more sugar into the bag



until the scale just barely tipped—"that being's I've been a pretty decent hard worker"—pause while the package is removed from the scale and neatly tied—"I ought to git a raise."

He snapped the twine, yanked the package and placed it with the others in a neat pile upon the counter. He was diving into the barrel for another scoopful when Mrs. Ruddy rallied.

Her attack was direct, wholesale and relentless—like a steam shovel.

"If there's a thing I can't stand," she rumbled, pounding her fists into her Spartan hips, "it's an ingrate. Yes, sir, an ingrate. Why, where'd you 'a' been 'f it hadn't been for me? Jest picture it to yourself; out wallerin' around in the snow, like a Eskimo and not doin' half so well at it, neither. Who took you in and give you a job? Me. Who made you a self-respectin' useful citizen, 'stead of a prowlin' tin peddler? Me. Aint you satisfied with a nice, snug, cozy berth like this? What more does an ordinary mortal expect to git? D' you calculate I'm goin' to put all my profits into your wages? Well I should snum! I aint goin' to do it. You git enough—plenty. I never paid more'n eight dollars a week and I don't mean to do it now."

"Well," interpolated Perkins, weighing out another bag of sugar, "all I got to say is, you might 'a' said so sooner."

"And what's more, I want to tell you this: Mary Susan put the idea into your head. Don't deny it. I know it. She stirred up all this trouble—"

"Say, look-a here," broke in Perkins, in a peculiar tone of voice—something like a hard knot that wont become untied, "don't mention names. Don't do it, that's all."

"And she'll wisht she hadn't," finished Mrs. Ruddy, insensible to the warning.

A small piece of metal can become suddenly and intensely hot. Likewise a small person. Perkins' eyes were snapping violently and he made a strange clicking sound with his tongue. His scrawny little fist pounded the counter.

"That'll be all," he blazed. "This is for me and you to settle and nobody else. And by crickey, if you say any more, by crickey—"

Words failed. His head was swimming in a blue, electrical haze of fury. All his impulses swayed toward some ruthless action. He seized the nearest thing at hand, a package of sugar, and slammed it to the floor.

"That's what I care for your old store and your eight dollars and everything else."

Mrs. Ruddy stared in bewilderment at the beautiful, white mass so wantonly spattered over the grimy floor. It was waste. It was destruction. Her thrifty soul was appalled. But it served for her, an unimaginative woman, instantly to visualize this protest of the wage-earner against the meager rewards of labor. Perkins could never have planned and executed a more telling piece of eloquence. The spilled sugar dramatized and gave tongue to all his wrongs. It wrote largely and significantly before her eyes that the meekest soul may have streaks of rebellion at its humble core.

Perkins put on his coat and pulled on his cap and mittens. His hand was on the door knob when the woman spoke.

"How much did you say you expected to git?" she ground out between-her strong teeth.

"Two dollars more ought to be 'bout right."

Mrs. Ruddy was still staring at the heap on the floor.

"You can have it," she muttered. "But Mary Susan'll pay for this sugar—and lots o' other damage, too. Next time, you bet, she'll mind her own affairs."

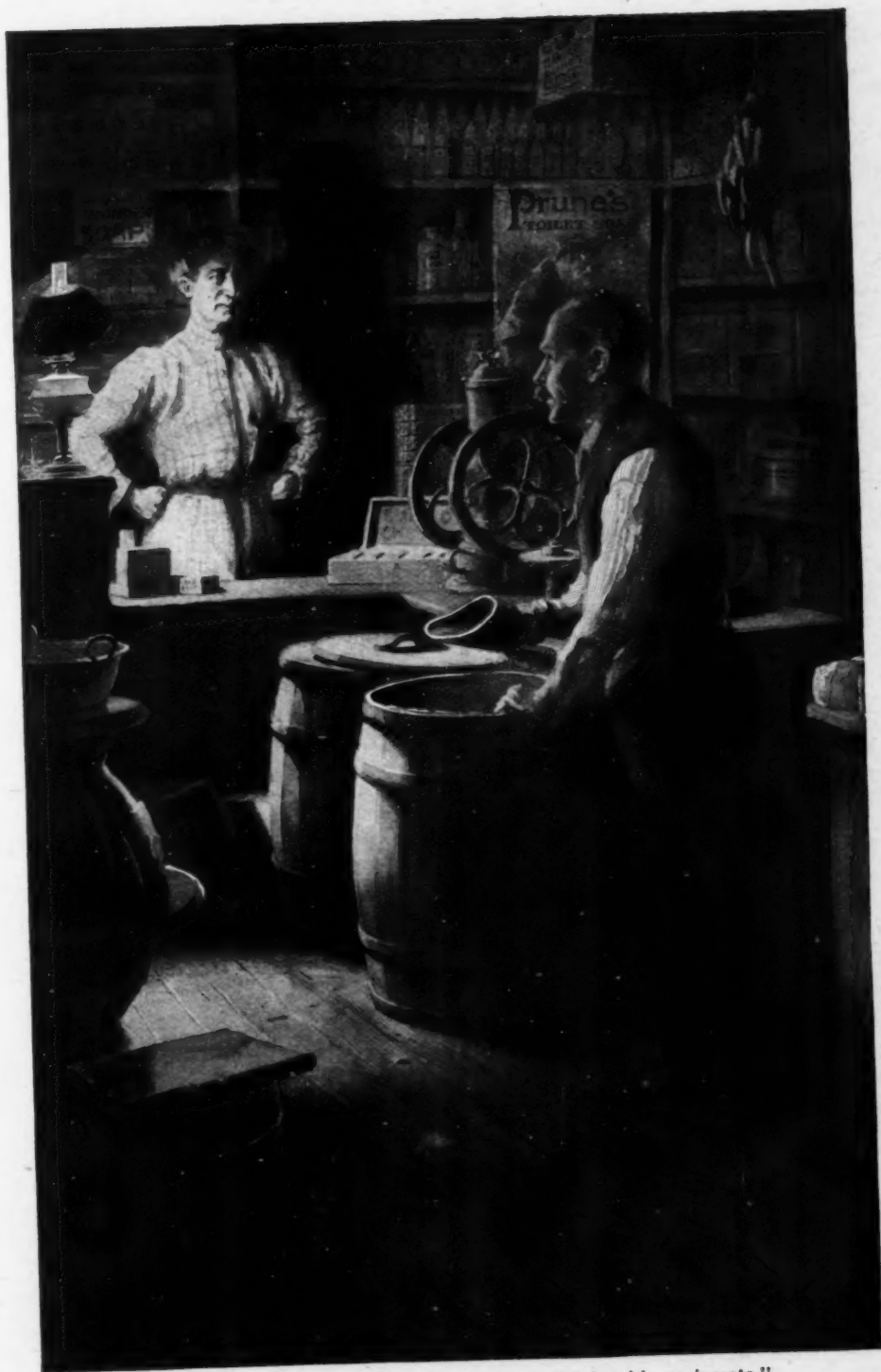
But Perkins didn't remain to champion Mary Susan. He was trotting across the street, tingling with the news.

"Got it!" he called as he threw open the door of Mary Susan's kitchen. "Yep! We both was madder'n mustard and Mrs. Ruddy, she sputtered like an egg in hot fat—but she give in. First time in her life, I guess."

"Jest as I told you," remarked Mary Susan, rocking cheerfully. "You got to stand up on your hind legs and claw air if you want to get your rights. Yes, siree!"

Perkins pulled off his shoes and got his slippers and pipe, ready to luxuriate after his triumph. Mary Susan rose and





"if there's a thing I can't stand," she rumbled "it's an ingrate"

took down her lamp from the shelf. Early to bed and early to rise was this excellent lady's working principle.

"Now that things is some brighter," she said, drawing the match across the wick and pulling down the chimney, "I guess you can figure on settlin' down here permanent."

"Guess so," chuckled Perkins.

"You need a little shelterin' after all o' these years o' bein' a wanderin' lamb. And p'raps a—a—a companion—some nice, good woman to perk things up and keep you happy and comfortable. There aint no substitute discovered yet for a pair o' woman's hands—nothin' just as good, even if science is so up an' doin' nowadays. Then when you git some better established, I don't see nothin' to hinder from startin' a store o' your own."

"S'pose I could?" murmured Perkins, with a stirring of ambition.

"All you need is a little gumption—and you oughter have that by the time you git your money saved up."

"You do make me feel sort o' proud," he acknowledged, "and you certainly do speed a feller along."

Then Mary Susan did an amazing thing. She came close to him, and with a sweet, friendly dignity, kissed him on the forehead. There was no time for him to speak, even had he been able to vocalize the emotion which trembled through him. Swiftly she caught up the lamp from the table and at the doorway across the room smiled, "It wont harm you none. Good-night."

### III

The one cataclysm in Perkins' life had occurred. He was trying to arrive at some logical deduction that might serve as a compass for a course of action. The store had been tidied up for the afternoon and he was standing in the doorway staring fixedly out into the early May sunshine. Leopold was inside in the carriage, quite contented to be left alone with a doll ingeniously fashioned by Perkins from a clothes-pin and a paper bag. So Perkins had no distractions but his own perplexed thoughts and emotions.

The previous evening at Mrs. Ruddy's request he had called at her house.

"Things has come to a pretty pass," said she when Leopold had been lured into slumberland and they had the sitting-room to themselves. "Yes, a pretty pass."

"You don't say," remarked Perkins.

"Yes, I do say. The whole town's a-talkin'. Seems to me I aint goin' to git no peace long's I inhabit this vale o' tears and long's the Lord peoples his earth with meddlesome busy-bodies. And the whole thing's this: you and me has got to git married."

"Married?" gasped Perkins.

"You needn't be so flabbergasted. It came right straight from Mame Saunders that some one says to a very clost friend o' hern that you and me has been plain business pardners long enough."

"Why, Mis' Ruddy!" gulped Perkins.

"And, what's more, that you're makin' up to Mary Susan a-settin' in her kitchen an' conversin' so confidential-like every spare minute you git. 'Course I've known it a long time, but now everybody else knows it. It's common opinion that Mary Susan aint got the right to so much o' your company when your very livin' depends on me. Yes, sir, your very livin'—and you needn't git mad."

"Guess you git value received for all you pay me for," bristled Perkins.

"That aint it and you know it. I aint goin' to have one solitary soul laughin' up their sleeves at me. I aint goin' to have wise looks when mine or Mary Susan's or your name is mentioned. No, siree! I wont have no one sayin' she's got the inside track. My dander's up. An' it's that insinuation that done it."

"Gosh hang it all!" muttered Perkins.

"I s'pose you think it aint delicate for me to speak up. But let me tell you this: it's high time women took the weapons o' protection in their own hands 'stead o' dependin' so much on men-folks in general—specially widders like me."

"Aint you takin' it too much to heart?" struggled Perkins.

"Nothin' o' the kind. And I'm goin' to silence every tongue that lisps a word 'bout Mary Susan gittin' the jump on

me. I'm goin' to be considered and I aint afraid to speak up. Now what are you goin' to do to stop the tongues a-waggin'?"

Perkins lifted a pair of pleading, startled eyes to those of his employer. "Me? Well—I dunno—course this has

"Anyhow, you take a day or so to think it over."

And here he was in the doorway, still at it—thinking, thinking, thinking. His gaze wandered in shocked astonishment—a hang-over from the night before. Could anyone believe it? Perkins had to



His heart once more beat the time of that old trudge-along song

kind o' got me flustered. I never was much of a hand for matrimony. I never quite s'posed a man could be gossiped into it."

"There's a thousand ways to git in," observed Mrs. Ruddy. "It don't make much difference."

"U-m-m," reflected Perkins—and a long silence followed, which Mrs. Ruddy tolerated with a frank impatience.

Finally, when Perkins had remained in his shell for a half-hour, and had successfully evaded all attempts to pry him open, Mrs. Ruddy dismissed him with these magnanimous words:

support his own credence with the one concrete fact—Mrs. Ruddy.

Customers came and went. He served them absently and after each sale took his place in the doorway again.

To his nostrils came something that stirred old images, a something that was soft, sweet—and prophetic. It was the air of early May. Like a vision of a dear familiar face it roused him. It spoke to him, also. The message filled his heart and rushed through his veins like a call. It was truth—a clear simple truth that he understood, a brother to his nature.

For a long time he pondered it, rem-

iniscid, became reacquainted, until Mary Susan's face floated before his eyes. Then he gave himself over to thinking of her, of her cheerful, warm human presence. And she made him forget the message in the early May air for a little while.

At last he decided—not easily, but to know, finally, was relief, a fresh accession of courage. He sighed and went into the store and behind the counter.

There he wrote a letter to Mary Susan. It shall remain forever sealed, because Mary Susan wont tell.

Next to Mrs. Ruddy he wrote as follows:

Dear Mrs. Ruddy:

I will say good-by. There's no hard feelings, only I conclude that being your storekeeper is one thing and being your husband is another. I aint ever kicked at anything reasonable, but this aint my duty as I clearly see it. That is, marrying you aint.

Being that you say my staying on makes talk, why I'll get out and then there wont be no more gossip for anybody which seems the best way out. Will close with best regards.

Perkins.

P. S. Mrs. Donovan wants 2 qts. best molasses, 1 yeast cake, 1 pkg. bird-seed, delivered. Her jug is over by the coffee mill. She says could she borrow our hammer? If so, bring it with the other goods—if not, dont.

This was sealed, addressed and placed on the counter in plain sight. Next came the tin-ware, resurrected from its dusty resting place on the back shelves and restored to its original position in life. Leopold was settled on the floor with a piece of taffy, which quite compensated him for the loss of the carriage.

A boy was hired for a nickel to take the note to Mary Susan—and with this last act all of Perkins' affairs in the little town were settled. The story was ended. Away with sighs and regrets.

The road unfolded and Perkins pushed the baby carriage piled with tin-ware before him. His heart once more beat the time of that old, familiar trudge-along song. God's sweet acreage of sounds, smells and sunshine was his. Far ahead were soft, bosom-like hills, fuzzy with the new-bursting foliage. And they were good—good!

## Crossed Wires

BY EDWIN L. SABIN

Author of "Manhandling Murray," etc.

IT may not yet be generally known, but upon the battle-scroll of fame the simple fact should be inscribed that the first foot-ball game played by electric light in the United States was between old Peterkin 'Varsity and Overland near-college. That was the year when but for a fluke or two we would have won the Western championship, and had we shown our actual instead of our accidental form we could have beaten Yale, Swarthmore, Suwannee, Tuskegee, and every other combination. It was the year before the year before the year when a Peterkin man was placed by the London *Times* on the All-

American eleven, and the year after the year after the year when two of our men were named on an All-State eleven even by Overland experts—the nine others being Overlanders. But naturally the fellows refused the job.

Between Peterkin and that aggregation yclept Overland existed the most beautiful and active *entente cordiale* that ever put poison in a reigning monarch's dish. Not that Overland was a rival of old Peterkin. Nay, nay! tut, tut! We valued Overland for the practice games that she—I should say, "it"—gave us, and therefore we retained it on our schedule; usually when lined up



against its sorry mess of hybrids we could count upon getting a fairly good work-out for our second string and substitutes. Occasionally our coaches grew absorbed in the intricate plays that they were trying on, and forgot the score entirely; and by the press and the Overland partisans it would appear that old Peterkin had been defeated. But, uh uh—not! The cheerless critic is reminded that comparative scores always are deceptive.

However, the "defeat" impression had gone abroad this year, just because as a matter of cold print and excited correspondents working various editors, the score of our annual practice game against Overland appeared We-Us 0, They-It 16. Everybody should and could have known that when the Peterkin new plays had been experimented with satisfactorily, and the team had waked up, we were going down the field ten yards at a clip, with five or six touchdowns in sight—but that the whistle blew—and that the Overland so-called touchdowns were the flimsiest kind of rotten flukes.

Why, dear folks, with the team playing its game we could have beaten that Overland bunch so fast that a professor of mathematics couldn't have kept the score! Consequently, this recent practice game evidently having been taken in dead earnest at Overland, and elsewhere in spots, thereby possibly tending to influence and delude and spoil the career of some susceptible unsophisticated high-school lad, we proposed for the Christmas holidays a post-mortem contest by electric light. Remember it? Peterkin *versus* Overland! Huh!

The Peterkin opinion, backed by the confidential representations of the coaches, was that by Christmas the team would be going well, and would play the game of which it was capable. That was all we asked: that the team should play its game. Then the waiting world would see how old Peterkin could toy with all would-be's, and send them back tied around with a rag.

The game was set as aforesaid, under the electric lights of the fair-grounds at

the capital of our proud and beloved state. Peterkin had three hundred and fourteen alumni and alumnae and alumnettes prominent in capital high society and Overland seemed to possess a few ex-pupils settled about in the farming district adjacent. Rumor said that indeed the city garbage collector was an Overlander *cum laude*—but he never confessed. However, this paucity of guilt would cut no figure—none at all. Nobody ever faced old Peterkin and did not get a square, fair deal—no, neither at home nor abroad. Down at Overland, on the contrary—huh! They were ruffians, at Overland. They had gentle customs of drowning the visiting team's signals, on the side-lines; of slugging and kneeling and gouging, on the field, and of cutting short the time, when Overland was ahead. Yes, sir. Why, the only reason that Peterkin seemed to lose, the last occasion, was because—but no matter. Back to our goats, as they say in French.

This electric light game was to be a love feast. Oh, a sweet example of the holiday spirit of peace on earth, goodwill toward men. Peterkin would remember that it was of noble blood; Overland must try to forget that it wasn't—and so must Peterkin. We loved Overland, Overland loved we, us loved them, them loved us; and meantime we of the glad fraternity Hot Tamale Tau were enabled to bet our heads off, until we had staked the linings of our pockets, had the chapter bull-dog in soak, and the Jap's wages used in advance for six months. Yes. As we heard, even the Oh My Omicrons, our lowliest not-competitors, borrowed from their *fratres in residente* and in *facultate*, on plea of fixing the furnace, and the girls—the Mu Mu's, the Gamma Gam's, *et cetera*—were down to fudges without butter or sugar.

The best dancers, the best lookers, the idols of the masses and the idles of the faculty, we of Hot Tamale Tau, were justly the pride of Peterkin. There were other Greeks, but they were of the order of pop-corn vendors. You know Hot Tamale Tau. Doubtless you've wanted to belong to it yourself. Sorry you couldn't squeeze through, old chap.



Biffy Robins was our *deus ex machina*: Biffy, roguish Biffy, with sixty-six neckties and a splendid manner, and the pleasantest way of stabbing of any near-student in the 'Varsity. To hear Biffy stab interested the professors more than to hear other stu—I mean, other fellows recite. He was

One of the few, the immortal few,  
Who were not born to flunk.

Being Society Editor of the *Daily Peterkin*, at the eve of the politely-termed "battle" which I so far have been approaching on the bias, he hung an editorial on the hook and it was accepted—the editor-in-chief being providentially absent. Thus it read:

#### OVER-LAND MUST BE CANNED

Who can lick Overland? Peterkin!

Who must lick Overland? Peterkin!

Who will lick Overland? Peterkin!

Let everybody be there. Where is the man with a soul so dead who never to himself hath said I'll live on oats and a crust of bread if we don't give Overland bloody Ned!

But let 'em down easy, boys! Peterkin never will stoop to win at any cost, unless it costs the other fellow. Let this be a fair fight and no favor and won on its merits. We of old Peterkin at this happy Christmastide will forget the past, when Overland mis-enthusiasts hit us on the ears with cushions and used a steam calliope to drown our signals and tried to steal our girls along with the game and otherwise acted like Pawnees on ration day. Next Friday night old Peterkin will win, as usual, but with the eyes of the world upon her she will win with hands up.

This was a perfectly lovely editorial, and Granny Whitten, Junior Law, barrister *in posse*, sage *in esse*, and counselor *ex-officio*, complimented Biffy. Biffy at once enclosed the editorial, marked, to Prexy, and suggested a credit in English. But the faculty—aw, put the rebuff into the discard. Who cares?

As I was about to say, Biffy had editorial transportation, and, as members of his staff, we went down to the historic scene on the day before, ahead of the plebeian special train. There were

Biffy and Spuds Wright and Dinky Mitchell and Granny and your humble servant—and the station tilted a bit when with our ribbons and Biffy's latest tie we stepped out from the coach. The mayor wasn't present, but three policemen were.

We immediately inspected the center of hostilities, or amiabilities, to see that the proper arrangements were being made. The ground for the gridiron had been covered with straw; a new system of electric lights had been strung. This was to date an open winter—the kind that lasts until June, you know—and in the words of a poet the crispy, wholesome air and the blue-smoke sky incited us to walk back to the hotel. But to exchange fancy for fact, we were long on walking and short on riding until the morrow night at, say, nine-thirty o'clock, when we should have found the stakeholders.

Hence we walked; we walked hence. By Biffy's recurrent sighs it struck me that his agile mind was intent upon a great problem.

"Suppose," he invited, "those lights quit in the midst of a play and the ball goes over for a touchdown?"

"Whose ball?" legally retorted Granny.

"Our ball."

Granny's Blackstonian brow contracted.

"The act of God," he decided. "We'd lick."

That sounded reasonable.

"But supposing it was their touchdown," propounded Biffy.

"Not on your life!" reproved Granny, severely. "That would be big H with the lid off!"

"Then those officials ought to be examined as to their doctrine and religious belief," complained Biffy. "See? You can't reconcile a beneficent Creator and bottomless brimstone; and if it is big H then it isn't the act of God and they ought to call the ball back."

The problem was deep, and we mused upon the mysteries of theology. But Biffy never would be balked by lack of faith in humanity; and the cover of his personal Pandora box was deadly loose.

After supper he beckoned Dink and me outside, into the gloaming.

"Where you going?" growled Dink.

"Come along."

"But where you going?"

"Shut up and come along."

We came. That was the custom, when Biffy bade.

Biffy took the trail fair-ground-ward; but two-thirds of the way there he halted, and nodded up at the top of a pole.

"See that?"

We saw. It was a fat pole, with a platform and an upright box into which and out of which ran cables and wires and things.

"What is it—greased?" queried Dink, crossly. "I can't climb it. Got on my best pants."

"That," instructed Biffy, "is a switch box of the electric light system of this whole blooming burg. If I get up there and pull a handle of a thingumajig I'm liable to put the kibosh on the governor shaving, or I'm just as liable to make a young man courting in some humble home rise up and call me blessed."

"How did you learn so much?" we asked, eagerly.

"I took the electrical engineering course for eight weeks, five years ago, before I was plucked and decided on law or medicine or archæology," reminded Biffy, modestly.

So he had. But he had taken so much since—the studies above mentioned, also Zeta Zip ice-cream, Sigma Slug hats, Freshman class presidents, and similar commodities!

"Well, shin up there then and squat and fiddle, if you want to," directed Dink, with rude brusqueness. "I'm going back to the hotel and earn some gate-money by skinning some of those Overland toddlers at pool."

"No," quoth Biffy. "Not yet, but soon. Listen. Here is where we win the game. See? Understand? All I do is pull a little handle, and we win the game."

"Up there?"

"Up there."

We gazed, in awe.

But Dink shook his head. I shook my boots. *Retro me Sathanas!*

"You're joking."

"Why?"

"That would be robbing them."

Biffy flushed angrily.

"Robbing what? That Overland crowd? That gang of shysters? They never beat us fair, did they? How about that fellow Jones they've got for full? He stole my candy when I was in skirts and he was wearing long pants and going to college somewhere then! Half their team ought to be home with the wife and babies, and the other half can't read! They'll all be playing professional ball next spring, if they can get bigger salaries! Most of them shave three times a day, now, to keep their whiskers down. I wanted to say that in my editorial, but I didn't."

"Fine editorial—beautiful Christian spirit; beat 'em on our merits," mumbled Dink. "Eyes of the world upon us—cats' eyes?"

"I had to work that out of my system, so something would be coming to me," explained Biffy, ingenuously. "But I said we'd win 'hands up,' didn't I? Well, this will be 'hands up'—on top of a pole! And haven't we Granny's authority that it would be an 'act of God?' That's law. So we've got right and law on our side—and anyway, if Peterkin doesn't win I'm flat."

So were we.

"It's about as fair as wire-tapping the races," I made bold to proffer.

"Not a bit," denied Biffy. "No comparison. We'll buck Overland just one yank; if the score is so close that wins the game, then we're entitled to it. Didn't they rob us, down there, last fall?"

They did.

"One yank. I wouldn't dare monkey longer. You fellows relay to me from the grounds, and at the high-ball sign I yank—and shut her again and skip. Act of God? Sure. Electric lights are always fizzing off and on, aren't they?"

"It'll be a dirty mean dago trick, just the same," protested Dink.

"Seems to me you're horribly sacri-

legious about it," answered Biff with honest indignation.

So we formulated our low-down plans. I was to signal from the grounds to Dink in a tree; Dink was to signal on to Spuds (we knew we could persuade Spuds, who had narrowly escaped getting inveigled to Overland, once); Spuds was to signal on to Biff, and Biff was to yank the switch open and shut, and scot. Then if the team hadn't sense enough to sneak one over we'd know that as a legal counselor Granny never could shine.

Now I will tell about the game. That was, indeed, at the outset a rhapsodic event. "There was a sound of revelry by night," as gathered the beauteous daughters and gallant sons of old Peterkin, and made faces across at the nondescript retainers of Overland. Peace and goodwill reigned in the jolly slogan:

Pee-Ee Tee-Ee Ar-Kay I-En—  
PETERKIN!

Pee You En Kay! Pee You En  
Kay! OVERLAND!

So too, the Christian spirit was breathed in the reply that boomed across the field to us:

Overland, Overland, Overland, Oh!  
Where will poor petered-out Peter-  
kin go! ON THE DUMP!!

Meanwhile, during the preliminary practice of Christmas exchanges, I was stationed on the top row of the bleachers, in the corner at the edge of the amphitheatre, and Dink and Spuds were ready to boost Biffy up the pole, after the game had commenced. Naturally, Biff desired to perform his ascension viewed only by his own spectators.

The game was to be played in the quarter-stretch field opposite the grandstand. The straw had been removed at the last moment, the ground was in bully shape, and the electric lights shone brightly. All the wealth and chivalry and also the tattered edges had collected to witness the feeble efforts of Overland against old Peterkin. I chanced to be back of a bunch of connoisseurs; and when our fellows trotted upon the grid-

iron I seemed to hear the honest comment: "Ah, there they are! Those are the boys! Now we'll see football!"

So they would, if our fellows played their game. But from the very first fumble I knew that something was wrong. We at old Peterkin of course rely upon pluck and skill and science; and we were outweighed by the great, big, burly Overland farmers and section-hands exactly one pound, eight and three-quarter ounces to a man! Think of that! The statistics showed it! Besides, our left tackle had a dislocated toe, our quarter had a cold in the nose, and Bully Moses, our battering-ram half-back, had been obliged to study three nights a week. These are no bear stories. We were in an awful bad fix. But if the boys had played their game there would have been nothing to it. However, under the sad circumstances it was just as well to boost Biffy up the pole.

After Overland had scored by the usual fluke I sat and shivered, and six thousand people gurgled and moaned. At the end of the first half (this was before the new-fangled "quarters" for rest periods) the score was 6-0—the six being Overland. Then there was a horrid interval while the crazed Overlanders, assisted by numerous extra urchins, paraded in the chestnut serpentine, just as proud and happy as though they were beating instead of accepting a rattle from a baby. They outweighed us, and even with that they must score on a fluke because our quarter-back had a cold in his nose and the fellows misunderstood his articulation.

In the next half, old Peterkin started to come into her own and in spite of Overland's frantic efforts—in spite of their resorts to crude, low tricks, their brutal attempts to disable our most brilliant players, their shameless coaching from the side-lines, the vociferous efforts of their rooters to drown our quarter's signals—we made a touchdown. And with the score 6—5 in the progress of the second half, we began to have hope—only the difference of a goal kick, you know! How did we get the touchdown? No fluke about *that*, you may be sure. It happened this way:

Nimmer, the Overland quarter-back, fumbled a pass. Bully Moses bounced the ball with his knee (quick wit, you see); Pat Flanagan followed it up (more quick wit), and just as it rolled across the Overland goal-line, Smithie, our lightning end, fell on it. (*Encore* quick wit!) Pat missed goal, on account of his sore toe. He came near it, anyhow.

On his pole, Biffy, as I could imagine, was peering and listening, and in their trees Spuds and Dink were sticking fast while they, too, peered and listened. But the fellows still weren't playing their game. The date ought to have been put for Easter instead of when it was. It takes a fine-grained team like ours some time to round into form, and since the Conference regulations had interfered with opening practice on the Fourth of July, we were slow in striking the gait. Overland practiced all the year through, with pumpkins on the farm.

Now, that six-five score stuck, and stuck and I began to foresee that we must call on Providence to move in a mysterious way. I gritted my teeth, and poised at the scratch, ready for the pistol. Five minutes more to play. There came a lovely chance: Peterkin had the ball at the Overland ten-yard line, on the second down, in the middle of the field, with a run waiting, around either end—and standing, while all breaths were being held, all eyes were glued fast, behind my back I signaled.

Nothing popped! I kept wagging the flag, for, hcy jiminy, the play was starting! Now, *now*, Now! But no happenstance—except that up the side of a well-inhabited hill beyond the end of the fair-grounds, a large patch of black suddenly appeared where before all had been twinkling brightness. From his tree Dink (as he afterward fluently narrated) beheld a similar phenomenon nor'-nor'east; and from *his* tree Spuds (as afterward he, quite as fluently, narrated) witnessed a like eclipse nor'-sou'-west.

In your mind's eye, gentle reader, don't you see Biffy in his box jerking handles as fast as he can and jerking the wrong ones first? I do. Talk of in-

tuition! There is a lad with a bump of intuition caved in so it would hold an egg! Of course, as he kindly explained ninety-nine times, the place was full of handles all looking alike; but a blind Captain Cuttle without a hook could have done better than he did.

He merely chose the middle when he should have chosen the extreme left, and then he went down the right and back again.

Smart youth! As for me, great globs of bloody perspiration rolled from me and streaked the boards and plopped upon the ground far below, while the two plays went off and Overland took the ball. Our last show. One minute to play. And the fellows still not in form, doing badly. But at this moment Biffy, as reckless with those handles as a Jove, Jr., loose among his pater's fire-works, finally got to the last and the correct one. With shocking suddenness every light over the grounds vanished; there was a Stygian darkness; there was a medley of groans and shrieks and cheers from the crowd, a volley of grunts and wheezes and yelps from the crimson gridiron—and when the lights flashed up Overland was sitting upon the ball behind the Peterkin goal-line!

Foul? Certainly it was a foul! Kick? Certainly we kicked! But the officials (we found out later that the referee knew a man who had a cousin at Overland once) allowed the score, and the best that we could do was to meet the Overlanders more than halfway and demonstrate upon their hats and coats and mortal frames what an outraged community thought of them.

Humph! As if they were springing an original theory, the officials took refuge in the "act of God" excuse; and the follow-my-leader newspapers in the morning announced the same—which, as Biffy the journalist elucidated, only proved the unreliability of the daily press. Granny could have expounded the correct solution—but the Sunday editions would have refused it. And the record of that return journey to the vale of Peterkin is yet a drear and rankling memory.





Campson

## The Book O' Rules Man

BY EDWARD HUNGERFORD

Author of "The Towerman," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY MONTE CREWS

THEY said that his wife had left him, up in Logansport or Muncie or some other town of the gas belt, because human blood had stopped flowing in his veins; they said that he had been "canned" once on the Big Four because he had put the "super's" brother, with an unsigned trip pass, off a local. Why, they said that he had once put a cripple off a train. He never was scientific in his methods; he couldn't throw a

tramp from a moving freight-train so that either the tramp's back or the pole would break, but he just sat on 'em and turned 'em over to the railroad detectives at the end of the run. Campson was the constant opportunity for gossip at every roundhouse on the division. When all other topics failed, the little group that constantly changed, but always sat in the road foreman's office there at the old roundhouse at K—, could always



turn their talk to the Book o' Rules Man. That was what they called Campson, who had slowly worked his way on our division from the freight up into the passenger service.

"He never was human," said old Mark Stanley, who pulls a three-bagger all the way from Dayton through to Indianapolis and who has a heart as big as a barrel of apples and twice as well filled. "I remember one time—it was jus' a month, thank God, an' not a minute longer, that I was pullin' a train for him over on the eastern division. We shipped two 'boes back o' the tender who was working their way back to Chicago. Only they wasn't 'boes as you might be thinking. They had belonged to the Brotherhood, got busted in the big Lehigh Valley strike, an' they gives me the grip an' the number of their "local," so I looks the other way while they stows away—on my tender, mind you. But this here Campson he spots them an' there wasn't any pass-word that would get him. He pulls 'em off as we gets out o' the yard and makes a report on me to headquarters. O'course headquarters only laughs and makes a pencil mark on my envelope while I gets a new conductor or quits work."

So it went. They sat and spun more tales about the Book o' Rules Man—truth blending with fiction, as you might say, and Campson getting the black end of it in every paragraph. There was a big black mark set against him all the way from Pittsburg to St. Louis.

But there wasn't any black mark against him on his record envelope. "Good," "excellent," "recommended," were all the comments that were marked there and so when the biggest boss of all of us sets his nerve and tacks Number Eleven on the time-card, they picked out the Book o' Rules Man to take her across the long tangents and the big long grades from Columbus to Indianapolis.

You don't know Eleven?

Of course, you don't. She isn't put on the time-cards that our road gives out; they haven't a lot of pretty pictures of her grinding up the rails to the 'land o' the setting sun,' as one of them G. P. A.

poets might get it, but nevertheless she is the slickest traveler in the whole U. S. A.—runs from New York to St. Louis in a clean twenty hours—which is going some for ten hundred and fifty-eight miles. She's a mail train and she turns up her nose at these fancy affairs that just fuss around with passengers.

You know the Billington family has had the transcontinental mail contracts for about a third of a century now. It is nice advertising for them—"The Route of the Fast Mail," with a pretty girl standing by the track and watching the choo-choo cars a-sneaking from Cleveland over to Toledo at sixty miles an hour—and something better than advertising—good, fat government contracts with Uncle Sam's check coming just as regularly as the new moon in the west.

Well, when our folks got their new depot down in New York they began gunning for those contracts. You know the Billingtons run mighty good railroads, and it keeps our folks a-hustling trying to run a better one. So our big boss goes down to Washington and he pulls and hauls and finally he gets in to see the big man there at the White House. The big man looks worried. He's got more to worry him than two big railroads fighting for mail contracts—he's got Mexico and Japan and Reciprocity and the Metropolitan club of Washington, and Brooklyn Sunday School day and the Wyoming county fair speech all on his mind at once, and so he looks at our big boss as if he were a boy standing with his hat in his hand, and says:

"Mr. Bardwell, why don't you put a train on and see what you can do with her—to St. Louis, say—and then I'll see what the Postmaster General can do about it."

And that was how Eleven was born—while our big boss was stumbling out of the Executive office and dodging secret service men and bright little reporters all in the same bunch.

The big boss gets back to his own office, sounds the tocsin, and in two hours the private-cars begin to move toward Philadelphia—general managers and general superintendents coming to the conference to spot a new train on our road

that will make the Billington flyers look like a pick-up freight. They excludes the passenger agents—for I told you that Eleven was to have some class—and the big boss talks tacks to all the big bosses that come to Philadelphia and his office with their hats in their hands.

"Eleven's got to make a clean record," he says, "and that doesn't mean excuses. That means a clean sheet here before me, so as to save any changes in the personnel of the system."

That was plain talking, as you might say, and the moral of it wasn't lost on a single operating man of the line. They went back to their own offices and they had more conferences, picking crews and motive-power for the new flyer the full length of the system. It is one thing to put on a fast train for a single run and let her make a record that will get her on the front pages of the newspapers and another thing to have her hold to the record—day in and day out; after the element of novelty has worn off, keeping her up to speed becomes the hardest sort of nerve-racking work, especially when winter has come upon us and the grades across the mountains are doubly fearful stretches. That was what Eleven meant to our men.

Sam Nelson was our big new superintendent here on the Middle division. He took Eleven right to heart, just as the big boss had intended he should do. He fussed about for a full week picking her crew, and then he had it complete, engineer, fireman, brakies and conductor. He took Campson off the through passenger run and put him on the new rule train. McCormack, his chief trainmaster, brought Campson over to the boss.

"You'll remember him, Mr. Nelson,"

said McCormack. "He's steady and we can rely on him."

"Sticks straight to the rules of the game?" asked Sam Nelson.

"They call him 'the Book o' Rules Man' out in the roundhouses," grins McCormack. "That little, smudgy, black-covered book is more than code to him. It's more than the constitution



He couldn't throw a tramp from a moving train so he just sat on 'em

of the U. S. A., a durned sight more than the wedding contract; it beats the Good Book to Campson."

And so it came to pass that the Book o' Rules Man was given Eleven.

That was a hard winter—year before last. There was an uncommon lot of bad weather, with the snow bills piling

so high against the operating department that the auditing men went around like sick children when half scared to death with measles; and then after that we got those March sleet storms—with the wind and the ice laying down the telegraph poles for sixty miles west of Pittsburgh and the big boss sending as far east as Boston, Massachusetts, for linemen. But Eleven? She made her time. Her sheet was the cleanest we ever had, road or division, and I've told you already we take off our hats to nobody as a first-class line. If Eleven got in trouble, somehow she'd make it up before she reached St. Louis—where the post-office folks took tab of her. How they did it only those big fellows in the cabs ever knew. Point was, she did it, and then we got wondering when the first slip-up would come, who'd be the first man to walk the plank for "unnecessary detention Train Eleven."

I think I said that Eleven did not carry any passengers. I want to correct that. For just a stretch—over our division—she did. Thirty-seven pulls out of New York along in the late afternoon for Chicago and Cincinnati. She also pulls a through sleeper and a day-coach for St. Louis. She is scheduled into Columbus about ten minutes ahead of Eleven, and for a time they used to cut off those two St. Louis boxes and send them down on Eleven to Indianapolis—where they'd cut them off again and send them loping off again down toward the Mississippi on a "pick-up" passenger and express that comes down from Detroit and Cleveland and takes small favors thankfully received. The folks in those cars got their breakfast in a diner before they were cut off Thirty-seven and their dinner there in the Union Depot at Indianapolis. You wouldn't catch Sam Nelson hauling any diners over the long grades on Eleven. He stood pat against the traffic folks on that—even if he did finally give in about those two St. Louis cars.

You see they don't overdo Eleven with extra cars. There are just three of the big red steel boxes tucked on her when she gets out of New York at mid-

night and starts racing across Jersey, cutting off miles to the north of Philadelphia on the Trenton freight line, for every mile means a minute and every minute saved helps toward that twenty hours, New York to St. Louis. She hesitates at Harrisburg just long enough for them to take off a big "K-I" and put another on. Then she's off again and tackling the mountain grades, up all the way beyond Altoona, chasing around the Horseshoe like a spirit of the night, and piercing through the Gallitzin like a six-inch shell punching a masonry wall. She cuts around outside Pittsburg, crosses a thousand-foot span over the yellow Ohio as if it were a culvert, and stands a-panting in the dirty old depot there at Columbus at sixteen minutes before noon. Then there is another awful leg, and then Indianapolis. And after Indianapolis, straight stretches—sixty, seventy, seventy-five miles an hour, over the Wabash and the Illinois Central—and at seven o'clock in the evening, across the old bridge, through the dirty tunnel and into St. Louis. Not much slack to be taken up in that schedule, and if Thirty-seven was laid out ten minutes, the two St. Louis cars could wait there at the Columbus Union depot. Eleven didn't even bother about excess-fare passengers.

And yet, if we were running clean as clockwork we'd be taking a bunch of pretty ordinary citizens across Ohio and Indiana in the fastest train that ever took it into her head to run ten hundred and fifty-eight miles at a stretch. Of such a sort was the Widow Woman. She was going to St. Joseph, Missouri, and not being, as you might say, overly blessed with this world's goods, she had ridden in the day-coach all the way from West Philadelphia—she was ticketed up from Wilmington, Delaware—with the Kid. It would have been hard enough for the Widow Woman if she'd been alone, hard enough if the Kid had been well, but with that youngest citizen on Thirty-seven yelling all the night as if he hoped finally to make his mammy understand that something was dead wrong with his interior department—well, even old Campson looked kind of



"If this child cannot have some boiled milk in twenty minutes, it is going to die"





Under the shade of a group of maples appeared a farm-house

human when he reached down for her interline.

Still, habit is habit, and Campson fingered the long, green ticket as if he wasn't quite sure whether it was all right. All the time the Kid was a-yelling, as if his little heart was going to break right in two.

"Anything the matter with him, Madam?" says Campson, sort of formal, as if he was measuring the Kid up and wondering when he'd be passing in at half-fare or else defying the Interstate Commerce laws and running the risk of sending honest passenger conductors to the penitentiary. He leaned over and looked into the baby's face. And the baby looked into his—such a look as seemed to say, "Help me, mister. I want to be a man, a big man and President of the United States, or boss of Tammany Hall or something else worth while, and there's something that's trying to pull me off into an unknown land."

Campson read that look, but he simply folded the ticket and handed it back to the woman without answering her

question. Then he went back into the sleeper—went from section to section and quietly asked if there was a doctor aboard that car.

A man who was reading a newspaper, all about the latest row with Japan and how Mr. Taft was sending his own personal representative over to the Mikado, and who was enjoying life in carpet slippers, looked up and pleaded guilty. The conductor beckoned him forward into the day-coach. The doctor lifted the baby up into his lap—as gently as if he had been a woman. The other folks on the train began to gather at a little distance. After a minute, the doctor beckoned Campson to him and whispered:

"If this child cannot have some boiled milk within twenty minutes, it is going to die."

And Eleven was not half an hour out of Columbus—with her next stop at Indianapolis, a hundred and sixty miles down the line.

"Do you think that doctor knows what he is talking about?" said a bald-headed



man who sold suspender buckles for a New York house and who stood in the aisle. There was another drummer in front of him—who hailed from St. Louis—and he glared at the New Yorker.

"Know," he gasped. "Know—that, sir, is Vladimir Brenda, the best surgeon in the whole Southwest. He gets about ten dollars a minute for his time."

The man who stood in carpet slippers was fondling the baby like an expert, whispering a word or two of comfort to the mother in a tongue that, to them, was familiar, not strange. After a moment, the big surgeon from St. Louis addressed the conductor once again.

"If this child does not have that boiled milk within twenty minutes, he is going to die," he said.

Campson hesitated. If they had only been hauling a dining-car, even a sleeper with one of those nigger-broiler-buffets. If he could get a wire back to headquarters at Columbus. He almost laughed. They could never act in less than twenty minutes there. Instinctively his fingers felt their way to his book of rules. A wave of color welled up into his gray face.

"Got to make an important connection with the Monon at Indianapolis an' can't afford to get laid out," murmured the little man from New York who sold suspender-buckles. "If I'm not in Memphis to-morrow I lose a big order."

"If I'm not in St. Louis to-night," said a man who had come in from the sleeping-car, "there's going to be much more lost than an order, but I'm hoping that this conductor—"

"He's going to stop the train," said the drummer.

"Thank God," said the other.

Campson was reaching for the emergency, while the New Yorker was swinging around on his heels and facing the new-comer, a gray-haired man with the unmistakable bearing of an army officer.

"Well, Colonel," said the man from New York, "you've called the turn on me—and I'm ashamed of myself. But I didn't think they'd lay this train out for the President of the United States. She's the fast mail, y'know. When the King of

England wants to send a letter to his cousin, the Prince of India, it catches this train for the first part of the dash across the U. S. A. Big trains and big steamships fret for fear this train is going to be late—"

What more he had to say concerning the importance of Eleven, was drowned by the voice of that leviathan itself as—wheels screaming under tight clamped brake-shoes, steam roaring out from the escape under the suddenly increased pressure, car-bumpers growling as the coaches piled up against each other—the heavy train was pulled up. Eleven was not used to such a peremptory hand on the rein and voiced its protest with vehemence; in a moment, still exhaling stridently, like a live creature halted in full flight, it came to a standstill.

As the train slowed down the officer had leaned forward and picked up the kid in his arms. Now, followed by the Widow Woman, Vladimir Brenda, the "traveling man" and sundry others, he strode along the aisle to the vestibule and descended the steps to where Campson stood glancing nervously about him. In front of them a tall-grown corn-field obstructed the view; behind, a stretch of woodland pasture seemed equally unpromising; with the quick eye work of his profession, the army man decided in the negative. Hurrying up the steps again, he waited while Campson quickly jerked open the opposite door, then followed him down the steps on that side. There before them was a grass-grown cross-road; and under the shade of a group of maples at the top of a little hill, there appeared a neat, white farm-house. Without waste of words the officer strode up the road, bearing his now feebly meaning burden heedfully. Campson hurried ahead; the mother and the doctor followed close after.

It was under the cooling comfort of one of those big maples that the officer soon placed the baby—he handled it with a skill that must have been born of long experience. The rest of the little group went into the kitchen of the farm-house, the army man at their heels. But the house-wife, who had been informed



The officer pulled out his card

in a word by Campson as to what was wanted, shooed them all out again—all save the big doctor from St. Louis.

"First time I was ordered to retreat—and obeyed," laughed the army man.

The drummer laughed also. Together they went out into the orchard and stopped at the well. The drummer said that he had been born at Chittenango, which is in Madison county up in New York state, and that they used to have the same sort of a Seneca Falls pump on his father's farm. The army man drank with him. They touched tin cups with the solemnity of a rite, and then the two men sat down together in the orchard—looking down on waving yellow fields and the dusty-red train that was halted as patiently as a local picking up milk cans at flag-stations, while the army man told the drummer some of the corkingest stories that he had ever heard.

The baby lived.

Brenda, B. A., M. D., and a good deal

of the rest of the alphabet, said that it would, and Brenda had never been known to make an incorrect diagnosis. The drummer put a yellow bill in the mother's hand and the army man gave her his card, and said that some day they would make a soldier boy of him. Then as they went back to their sleeping-car, they espied Campson—Campson fearfully worried, as he ordered his train ahead and noted that Eleven had been delayed for twenty-seven precious minutes.

"It isn't that I couldn't square it with our own folks," he finally admitted, scratching his poor, old, puzzled head, "and I don't care so much about that anyway. But it's the road's record with the postoffice folks." He shook his head in despair. "The big boss'll never forgive me for this black mark on Eleven's record. The government folks—"

"I'll take care of the government folks," said the man in khaki.

"You?" demanded the Book o' Rules Man

The officer pulled out his card. The drummer stood on his toes and read it over the conductor's shoulder.

"Lambert Rose, Major General Commanding, U. S. A." he read softly, but then listened.

"I'm scurrying off to Japan—on a little personal mission for Mr. Taft," said the army man, "but I think I can send him a letter back from St. Louis that will set this matter straight."

And in that moment the drummer from New York made the one great tactical error of his life, a blunder for which he never can forgive himself. He forgot to ask the President's ambassador to Japan what would be the opportunity for a sharp-witted man to land the suspender-buckle contract for the United States Army. It must have been some contract.

The other night, I rode down on Forty-eight with Harry Andrus, our car-voucher clerk at Logansport. He was telling me of the Book o' Rules Man—hammering just like the engine-crews out in roundhouses used to hammer him. It seems that Harry Andrus married a second cousin to the Mrs. Campson that

was, and there was no hell hot enough to broil the old conductor in. I listens quietly and says:

"Didn't he once get demerits for something that happened on Eleven—that laid her out thirty minutes and let her miss the Burlington mail connection in St. Louis?" I asks, innocently like.

"He did," says Harry Andrus, as if he was telling me some news. "And, say, he must have had an awful pull. That was a state's prison offense, we was all told, and Campson he gets a letter—a letter of recommendation from the big boss. 'Twas his old pull, he says. But the way he treated his wife that time they lived down there on Piqua street—"

Then I gets a little hot myself and says:

"I aint very much in the confidence of the Lord, myself," I says, "nct following so closely in His paths—but—I'll take my chances on Campson."

And then I up and told him of the day that our Eleven halted so a little kid might have a running chance to be President of the United States or boss of Tammany Hall or something else worth while.

## The Double Donohues

BY FRANCES A. LUDWIG

Author of "The Acknowledging of Earl," etc

ILLUSTRATED BY B. CORY KILVERT

**PAT** DONOHUE was short, stubbed, black-freckled and black-haired. So was Mat Donohue. Mat Donohue had gray eyes, an impertinent nose and a wide mouth full of white, even teeth. So had Pat Donohue. Both had just reached lawful working age and both wore coats too tight, trousers too short and collars too large for them.

Alike as they were in looks, they differed largely in dispositions. Pat was alert, self-possessed and self-assertive,

even inclined to be pugnacious at times; and because he was his brother's senior by half an hour, he always took precedence in matters pertaining to the two. Mat was slow, timid, and tried to give trouble as wide a berth as possible.

Twins were a novelty to the shipping-room—and the shipping-room always welcomed a novelty. So Pat and Mat, after the briefest of preliminaries, were accepted as valuable additions to the "bunch," even though their duplicate

presence sometimes gave rise to complications.

When Stumper, as was his privilege and prerogative, had thrashed Mat for some violation of that moral code peculiar to the shipping-room, and then discovered that Pat, not Mat, was the real offender, he was at a loss to know what to do. He was not averse to administering the heavy hand of justice the second time, but he hardly wished to do a double injustice. As each boy declared vehemently that he, and he alone had been the recipient of the first punishment, Stumper was forced to drop the matter. He could not tell which boy he had whipped.

The boys were shrewd enough to discover that many advantages could be taken of their resemblance. A favorite trick of theirs was to procure extensions of their lunch hour, one impersonating the other. Again, one would do double duty while the other "soldiered," and upon one occasion, when Mat was ill, Pat passed the timekeeper's desk twice in quick succession, thus securing an entry of his brother's presence and saving him from being fined. Their growing boldness eventually would have led to their dismissal had not an incident occurred that severely chastened their adventurous spirits.

The superintendent of Barnhardt's was a man who had reached his high position by years of unremitting zeal in the interests of his firm, and a keen eye for the main chance. He was a person



Pat Donohue

of positively offensive virtue and it was deemed impossible by his employees that he ever could have been a boy. He seemed to bear a permanent grudge against all boy kind. He looked upon anything in the nature of levity as a misdemeanor; cigarette smoking was a crime punishable by instant dismissal; and for offenses graver—well, the consequences were too terrible to be mentioned save in guarded whispers.

One noon, as the usually inoffensive Mat stood at a corner of the alley defiling the atmosphere with his favorite brand of coffin-nail, he was surprised and pained to have a tall, attenuated gentleman grasp him firmly by

one ear and thus propel him rapidly along the street and into the main entrance of the store. In less time than it takes to write about it, Mat, with a signed order for his pay, was descending the stairs in search of Foley, who had charge of the boys.

"You're not fired," said Foley to Pat, who had followed at his brother's heels.

The three were alone in the little office. Mat's eyes were suspiciously red and Pat spoke gruffly.

"We has t' go. t'gedder—an'—an' me old lady's in bed wit' a sore foot. She smashed it last week wit' a flat iron."

Pat gulped. Foley was well acquainted with the extremely simple annals of the poor. He knew all that lay concealed in Pat's few words.

"It's too bad," he mused. "Why wasn't you more careful, Mat?"



"'Twas a butts," declared Mat mournfully. "Nuttin' but a butts—an' not more'n t'ree w'iffs at dat."

Lawrence Foley was an exception to the average man in his position, in that he did not stand in awe of his superiors, in that he was not "married to his job," and in that he was of a roving, rollicking disposition; and even as he considered the boys before him, his fingers fumbled absently the edges of a letter in his pocket—a letter from the far West with a call in it that had stirred his pulse and made him impatient of the monotonous round of his daily work. Moreover, Foley loved a joke and did not love the superintendent. So he suddenly slapped his knee and chuckled hugely.

"I've got it! Suppose I leave one of you down here and put the other upstairs—say in the mail order or the stock rooms. Carlisle goes up there about twice a year, and you could duck if you saw him first. D'ye see what I mean? He'll bump into you down here and he'll brace you and then come to me to find out about it, and I'll say, 'Yes, that's the twin brother of the one you fired.' He can't tell you apart and he's got no quarrel with Pat, and as long as he never sees but one of you at a time he won't know the difference. He won't think of looking up the pay roll, and if he should—why, you aint any worse off'n you are now, see?"

"But if he should?" hesitated Mat. "If he should find out how you've played it on him, wot den?"

"Don't you bother about me, son," said Foley, airily. "Just do your little stunt and I'll do the rest. Put the boys that know you wise and go on drawing your salary just the same. I'll put Mat up in little Feeney's place at the mail-order shipping-desk. Carlisle don't go near that skylight once in a thousand years."

There is usually an intense loyalty among youngsters employed in a large establishment, not so much to each other personally, as to one of their number as part of a whole, when arrayed against authority. "Snitching" is the grossest violation of this principle and to be con-

victed of it means measureless contempt and ostracism. So, though nearly every boy in Barnhardt's understood the situation perfectly, not one of them ever dreamed of betraying the plan.

The scheme fell out as Foley had planned, and Mat, dreamily pasting labels on express packages in a little, partitioned-off corner of the mail-order room, a department which at that time was disparaged as being of uncertain profit, was in small danger of discovery. In the course of time, the call of the letter in Foley's pocket became so insistent that he left Barnhardt's forever; his place was filled by a man who knew nothing of the circumstances relating to the Donohue twins and they had ceased to fear detection.

Pat's illuminating smile and quick wit soon won him promotion which bettered his immediate surroundings and brought him close to those high in authority. He became the superintendent's office-boy.

Carlisle, a man of irritable, nervous temperament, who wanted an order obeyed before it was given utterance, and who expected superhuman intelligence from those around him, found Pat to approach more nearly his ideal office boy than any who had gone before him. The superintendent actually began to rely upon the boy, to allow him some measure of responsibility, even to feel the miracle of a dawning liking for another person in the world beside himself. Upon two occasions he had handed Pat a quarter of a dollar from his own pockets. His stenographer, who usually dodged when he spoke to her, witnessed these transactions with awe; she wondered what spell the boy had cast upon the man to make him seem almost human.

Chance one morning caused the elevator boy to carry the superintendent past his floor. With a wave of his hand, Carlisle ordered the boy to continue to the top, and as the door slid back, the superintendent caught sight of Mat Donohue crossing to his skylight corner. He had just arrived and, fortunately for him, had not donned the long blue denim apron that would have been impossible to explain away.



"Patrick," called the superintendent in his querulous, jerky voice, "why are you loafing up here? Come down at once, sir. I have several important matters for you to attend to."

Mat stopped stock still, fright fairly oozing from him. He cast a despairing glance around. Young Aiken, his partner at the express desk, who had become abnormally busy when he heard the superintendent speak, glanced up with interest.

"Patrick," said the superintendent with growing impatience, "I am waiting."

Young Aiken suddenly grasped the situation and fell down two flights of stairs in his haste. He must reach Pat ahead of his brother if he wished to save the day—and Pat was even now, presumably, dusting the superintendent's desk.

Mat flashed a look of supremest gratitude in the direction young Aiken had gone; then he spoke huskily:

"Me—me pencil, Mr. Carlisle. I lent it t' Shorty up here an' I t'ought I'd come up early an' get it."

"Well, make haste, make haste!" The superintendent was fairly dancing with impatience. "Don't keep us waiting all day." The elevator boy, with a face as solemn as a sphinx, was still holding open the door.

Mat stumbled across the room, fell over a stool, with another grateful look snatched a pencil from Shorty, who held it ready for him; then he fell into the elevator.

The door closed and they shot down. Mat did not know it—but he was praying.

"Are you ill, Patrick?" inquired the superintendent with a slight lessening of his irritation as he glanced at the boy's white face.

"N-no, sir," gasped Mat.

He followed his superior with knees that trembled. One agonized glance around—the office was empty. Young Aiken had been in time and Pat, cursing his luck in fluent street-arab *patois*, was already on his way to take Mat's place for the day.

When Mat recalls the horrors of that

long forenoon and what followed after, he shivers to this day. Impelled by his desperate need, he tried to copy the quick, nonchalant methods and air of his brother, and this, coupled with his fear of detection and his ignorance of Pat's duties, reduced him almost to a state of imbecility. Fortunately for him, the superintendent was absent the greater part of the morning on his tours of investigation. The stenographer, exasperated at the boy's blunders, concluded at last that he must be ill and advised him to go home or else to bathe his head, sit in a corner and let things alone.

Upon the superintendent's return, she went out to her luncheon and the palpitating Mat was left without any guidance whatever.

"Patrick," said the superintendent



Mat defiling the atmosphere



Young Alken fell down two flights of stairs in his haste

briskly, "take this invoice down to the receiving clerk and have him O. K. it; then take it to the foreign invoice man and tell him in future to attend to these matters himself. Then go and tell Miss Inderriden and the head carpenter to come to my office at once."

Mat shook in his shoes. In what part or portion of those acres of floor space lurked the receiving clerk? Who and what was a "foreign invoice man?" Would he be able to find Miss Inderriden or the head carpenter in a day or in an hour? He opened his mouth to ask—then closed it again. Pat would have known; he would have to manage in some way without causing comment—

The office door was opened by a bald-headed, rotund gentleman who wore a

diamond pin in his made-up tie. In one hand he held a morning paper and he seemed a trifle perturbed. He spoke without ceremony.

"How do you suppose these collars at Hanson and Zimmerman's got by your girl? Sixty-nine cents and I think they're the same things we're trying to get rid of at seventy-nine. Didn't she go over the 'ads' this morning?"

"Certainly she did," snapped the superintendent. "Congenital stupidity—same trouble they all have. Can't you send over after one of them?"

The rotund gentleman—he was Mr. Bernard Silberman, head buyer of department nineteen (ladies' neckwear, ribbons, embroidery, etc.)—shook his head. "They're on to Sadie—and Miss Normoyle's on her vacation. We're short to-day, anyhow."

Carlisle glanced over to his stenographer's empty chair. "Miss Hirsch is at lunch—if you had come up a minute sooner— But I'll send Patrick." He leaned forward and twitched the paper from Mat's limp fingers.

"Here, call one of Madison's boys and I'll give these to him. You go and buy one of these collars, these advertised in this paper, at sixty-nine cents, over at Hanson and Zimmerman's."

The superintendent scribbled an order on the cashier for the exact amount and shoved it at the boy. "Be quick about it, too," he ordered.

"Tell'm it's for your sister," called the rotund buyer as Mat walked away.

The superintendent looked up quickly. His gestures made one think of a bird as it flirts water from its bill.

"Pat really has some brains," said he. His voice held the merest tinge of pride as in some acquisition. "He has done these errands before and done them very cleverly, indeed."

Mr. Bernard Silberman was gazing in bewilderment at the contents of the parcel Mat had handed to him. He held a lace semi-circle to the light, pulled at its threads and bit it tentatively.

"You got this for sixty-nine cents?"

Mat nodded.

The buyer picked up the check. "That's what it says here, 'Sixty-nine cents,' but—Holy smoke, Carlisle! The thing's impossible. This would never retail for less than a dollar and a half—maybe more. Why, it's hand crochet, the best imitation of Irish there is, and I'll bet it never cost a sou less than twelve dollars a dozen—by the gross."

The superintendent was no authority on lace collars, but he looked wise and poked at the article with his pencil.

"Perhaps there's some mistake. Did some one give it to you, Pat—or did you pick it up yourself?"

"Dey was on a table in the middle aisle," answered Mat. "I handed it to de clerk myself."

"The price ticket and stock number's on it all straight," said the buyer. "But where on earth did they get 'em? Who's bankrupt? How can they do it? The article isn't damaged, either. Boy,"—with a sudden inspiration—"was there any more like this on the table? Were they all like this?"

Mat nodded again. "Just exactly de same." He could not have told the difference between point de Venise and cotton torchon.

"Well, it beats me," announced Mr. Silberman, "and I'd like to know what we are going to do. The only thing I've got near it is a line that cost over \$200 a gross. It would mean a loss of over fifty percent on 'em. I wish to Heaven the old man was here."

"He sails the fourteenth," mused the superintendent pensively. "But you know—he'd meet their competition—even at a loss."

"Yes, I know," said the buyer

bitterly. "And he's mighty careful to forget all about that part of it when the year's sales are added up. Leave it to him! But I suppose there isn't any other way. I'll have to mark some of 'em down. I guess we can stand it if they can."

It seemed as if telepathic messages must have communicated the news to all shopping woman-kind that day. In an hour's time the aisle where the collars were displayed was fairly impassable. Women stood four deep around the table; women elbowed and pushed each other to get within grabbing distance of the seductive bargain; tall women reached over; short women ducked under; women stood on the outskirts of the crowd and frantically demanded that collars be sent to them c. o. d.—that



Mat cast a glance around

clerks charge collars to their accounts and that collars be sent to their nieces, their cousins and their aunts. Saleswomen's voices grew husky from the repetition of "Only one to a customer, lady"—and still the influx of women continued and swelled.

Mr. Silberman mopped his brow and pressed his clenched fingers to his bald spot in lieu of tearing his hair as he paced back and forth and looked down upon the devastation from the glass side of the superintendent's office.

"Look at 'em," he groaned. "Just look at 'em! Trust a woman to find out the value of a thing! And I was fool enough to think it might get past 'em. And every bloomin' collar means a loss of eighty cents—from the cost price! By six o'clock not one will be left. I'm going to stop it; I'm going to take down the sign."

The stenographer, who had been absent to lunch while Mat transacted his fateful errand, wondered what was bothering the usually genial Mr. Silberman, but she was too much absorbed in deciphering ten solid pages of penciled curlicues to give him more than a passing thought.

"And still they come," murmured the buyer. "Did you ever see anything to beat it? What's that, Sadie?"

His head saleswoman stood outside, beckoning to him. "Mr. Silberman," she began, "every one of those collars calls for a jabot; the girls in the neckwear can't wait on the customers. Do you remember that line of white net and Arabian that we couldn't give away last season? They're up in the stock rooms and I thought perhaps—"

But the head buyer was already half way to the elevators and a stentorian "Going up!" had been his only answer.

"Sadie, you're a wonder," he exclaimed, as together they dragged down dusty boxes and emptied their contents onto wooden stands. "Here, gimme a bunch of pin-tickets. Go get the stock boys and have 'em help mark these up. And mark 'em double, double! Maybe we won't be in so bad after all."

"I just gave Haskins of the white goods, permission to stand a table down

at the end of your aisle," said the superintendent, upon the buyer's next appearance. "He said he had some embroidered linens that had been hard to move and wanted to see if he could get rid of some of them while the rush is on. How are you going to come out?"

"I think we'll break nearly even. Sure, let Haskins come in—while the water's warm." Silberman chuckled. "Hege-man's gnashing his teeth over behind the silk counter. He doesn't know what it's all about."

Still the frantic purchasing continued. Every collar sold a jabot, and as the head saleswoman of the neckwear noted the increasing jam before her counter, another brilliant thought popped into her mind.

"Mr. Silberman, Mr. Silberman!" She beckoned to him frantically. "You remember those collars and cuffs we got in two seasons ago? Those dreadful, crazy-looking—I mean those Persian patterns that were so hard to sell, the ones that Mr. Barnhardt—talked so much about?"

The head buyer rapped his head with his knuckles. "Solid—solid ivory," he opined. "Have some more ideas, girl, and we *will* break even, after all. Get the stuff out in a hurry. Mark 'em up twenty-five per cent. And don't stop there. Take that junk we've been saving for the basement Fridays and anything else that you happen to think of that came over in the *Mayflower*—and slap on the price. Do it up clean."

Again the buyer paced in front of the big glass window, but he rubbed his hands this time instead of his head. "Just see how things work out, Carlisle. I shouldn't be surprised if the day would show a profit—and if we get rid of a lot of that antiquated stuff it's just so much money found."

The stenographer had finished her letters and she looked longingly at the hands of the clock above her. There was still a half-hour's time before they would be perpendicular. She laid her day's output before the superintendent to be signed, and in so doing, brushed the original lace collar off to the floor. She picked it up and handed it to Silberman as he went on:



"But I can't understand where Hanson and Zimmerman got hold of these so that they could run them at the price they did. And from the mob over here you'd have thought there wasn't another lace collar on sale in this town. It's mighty queer."

"Hanson and Zimmerman's," said the stenographer. "Will you let me see it, please?"

"Sixty-nine cents." The buyer gave her the collar. "The boy got it for me this noon while you were out."

"Those aren't what Hanson and Zimmerman had on sale," said the girl in surprise. "I should say not! I know, for I've got one here in my desk. I bought it this noon for myself." Before the eyes of the buyer and superintendent, she unrolled a very inferior lace collar that had been priced to the utmost limit of its value.

Carlisle and Silberman looked at each other. "Patrick!" called the superintendent. There was foreboding in his voice and poor Mat shivered anew.

"Didn't you tell me the collars you saw were all like the one you bought?" asked the buyer.

"Yes, sir."

The buyer laid the two collars side by side. "Do these look the same to you?"

"Y-yes, sir."

The buyer dropped heavily into a chair.

"But how did he get the other collar?" persisted Carlisle. "Who sold it to you, boy? What sort of a looking girl? Did she seem to know her business?"

"'Twasn't a girl," stammered Mat. "'Twas a man."

"A man!"—from both gentlemen.

"Yessir; a—a kind of big guy wit'—wit' lots of yeller hair."

Silberman banged the desk before him



The lady advanced, her trophies in tow

with his fist. "That cocksure young assistant buyer of Norcross's!" he cried. "I begin to see a little light." He rose suddenly under the stimulus of an idea. "Did he ask you any questions, boy? Tell us what you said to him?"

Mat's round, black eyes were raised innocently to his questioner's face. "I didn't tell him nuttin' 'ceptin' 'bout w'ere I worked," said he.

The head buyer bounced high in his chair.

"You told him you worked at *Barnhardt's*!" he howled.

The superintendent fell back in his chair and apostrophized the ceiling: "He told them he worked at *Barnhardt's*!"

At that very instant a descending elevator stopped directly opposite the of-



fice; the door rolled back and out stepped the lady who was manager of the mail-order department. Her right hand had a strangle hold on the collar of young Aiken and her left was clamped with equal firmness back of Pat Donohue's neck. It was evident that young Aiken had temporarily lost the use of his left eye, while Pat's nose was bleeding copiously and growing with a rapidity entirely at variance with nature's methods. With sparkling eyes and a set jaw the lady advanced toward the superintendent's office, her trophies in tow.

Carlisle, with one glance at her left hand captive, settled back in his chair again, limp.

"Wha—wha—what?" he gurgled intelligently.

"Why, whi—wha—?" babbled the head buyer with equal brilliancy.

But the lady was too much engrossed with her own indignation to notice them. "These boys," she began spiritedly, "have done nothing but *fight* since early this morning. I have been driven nearly distracted all day. When at last I had to call in the porter to separate them, I reached the limit of my endurance. Between them they have ruined a length of dress silk and broken—"

She caught sight of Mat Donohue shrinking in a corner and left the rest unsaid, her mouth remaining open in a manner truly inelegant.

The superintendent gathered his forces. "Patrick," he began feebly, "what does this—"

"He tried to put it over me because I was green an' didn't know de work." Pat jerked his head sullenly in the direction of young Aiken. "An' I wouldn't stan' fer it—dat's all. Mat, over dere in de corner—he's me twin brudder." Pat faced the superintendent bravely and

went on: "You fired him for smoking cigarettes. But Foley wouldn't let 'm be fired. So he put him in de mail-order department w'ere you wouldn't bump in-to him— An' dat was more'n a year ago. Everyt'ing's been all right since till yuse comes up der in de mail-order department and makes de mistake o' yer life. Me mudder's sick again, too and w'at wid dis kid guyin' me I didn't care wot happened. Dat's all—where's me hat?"

A boy tip-toed into the office and broke the silence that followed; before the superintendent he laid the list of the day's sales. Silberman snatched at them eagerly, then did some rapid figuring on a slip of paper.

"Look here, Carlisle; look here!" He waved the slip triumphantly. "Biggest day we've had since the holidays. Beats all the records for this time of year. Talk about a lucky move! And that kid of Norcross's thought he'd put one over on me. Thought he'd fooled old Barney! Sends me a high-priced collar with a sixty-nine cent tag on it so't I'd meet his price and do it at a loss. Oh, wait till I see Norcross! Wait till I tell him that the joke's on him! And say! When the old man hears about this he'll weep for joy!"

The superintendent actually smiled. He was eagerly scanning the sales lists of the departments adjacent to the middle aisle. He spoke in a curiously softened voice:

"Patrick, go and make yourself presentable and then report to your proper place to-morrow morning. I'm ashamed of you, sir. And as for you,"— Carlisle wheeled and faced Mat Donohue,— "go back to your place upstairs and see that you break no more rules."

"'Twas only a butts," murmured Mat as he slid away.



'Miss Patty?' said Bert, looking up inquiringly

## As To Stealing Roses

BY EUGENE P. LYLE, JR.

Author of "A Juggled Legacy," etc.

**N**OTHING this side of the River Lethe dies harder than a grouch. I'm meaning now the one nursed by Judge Moran regarding his son Bert—the young man who had refused to follow the paternal footsteps as a lawyer and had quarreled with the judge, his father, who had left home and won great success as a prestidigitator, and who two years later had returned to startle his native town and receive the forgiveness of his parents.

Here was Bert—otherwise Ncrambert, the continent's great young magician—come back to our little old town where he'd prestidigitated for a night right in our own Opera House until

none of us was rightly sure if the silver watch in his pocket wasn't a fried egg; and here was the dear little old lady, his mother, who had coyly led his grumpy Honor up to where the psychological moment—no, whirlwind—of the youngster's home-town triumph would drop on him hard; and here was the dazed old Judge, feeling some better about Bert being a full risen hocus-pocus virtuoso instead of just a rising young lawyer, and taking the disowned laddie back to his broad bosom and home for the night—for Bert's mother declared the sheets at the Overton House were sure to be damp.

Yes, here were things just that way,

and yet the Judge's grouch wouldn't lie down peaceably and take the count. Maybe he took nine of 'em, the grouch did, but anyway he was up again before breakfast, and that sore harassed boy Bert was in for the stiffest round of his brave young life. Why so? Oh well, that's an idle question. Of course, there isn't but only one answer. There was a girl in it.

She wasn't in it in the usual fashion, though—mind that. Bert wasn't after a girl that the family didn't want. Not at all. He was after one that they did want. Curious, but the trouble was just there, for the Judge's second edition of grouch was because Bert couldn't get her. At least the Judge grunted scornful at the idea of Bert's having a ghost of a show.

Bert might have had her, too, and that fretted the Judge worse; because Bert had been well up towards first in the running as concerned Miss Patricia, and if he had stayed at home studying law instead of quitting with the second volume of Blackstone— Oh well, what's the use? Bert didn't, that's all, and while he was away those two years conjuring nine-sheet poster success, Patricia, on her front stoop, wasn't telling the other sprinters that the gate was nailed on—not Miss Patricia, or any other girl. Patricia's father regularly charged a pair of hinges, annually, against Patricia's trousseau. It looked as if that latter was soon going to be needed, too.

The judge made that plain to Bert, brutally plain. Miss Patty, as he called her, was a prime favorite with Judge Moran. He brightened whenever he heard her voice in the house, and Mrs. Moran was just as fond of the girl as a mother. Both the old folks, without any daughter, wanted that sweet voice in the family for keeps. At breakfast, following the psychological readjustment with Bert already referred to, while the prodigal was enthusiastically buttering his pancakes, the Judge had to go and mention Miss Patty. The Judge couldn't help it. It was the grouch, and he was bound he'd rub it in on Bert, because of the boy's shiftless manner of losing an old sweetheart.

"Miss Patty?" said Bert, looking up,

inquiringly. "Why, isn't that the little girl I used to call Mike? Sure, and she had a tilted—"

"A nose, sir, that will tilt up a-plenty at you," growled the Judge.

"Why," said Bert, "I believe I'll call in and lock her over."

The Judge sniffed indignantly, but as for quiet little Mrs. Moran, Bert couldn't palm off any such casualness as that on her, even if he was a necromancer. She was onto him with one glance out of her soft old eyes. She knew as well as a mother can know that Miss Patty was *the* magnet that had drawn the famous Norambert to our little town. And she was *for* him, too. I mean, unlike the Judge, she backed him to win. She looked into his mischievous, dancing eyes, and being a woman and his mother—pshaw, of course she backed her own boy to win any princess on earth.

"Look her over, eh?" snorted the Judge. "Look over Miss Patty! I'll—I'll disown you, sir, if you so much as attempt it."

Bert grinned. His blithe audacity, as you might call it, never deceived anybody except the Judge. It was really the boy's charm, for anybody could see in a minute, when they looked into his fun-loving eyes, that his audacity was only boyishness and that he was just as un-conceited and modest as could be; his cool impudence was a real treat, and everybody cottoned to him from the word go. Of course, when Bert discovered that this imperturbable nonchalance of his enraged the Judge, he was too sly a tease not to be just as imperturbable as possible.

"What's more," proceeded the Judge, glaring over his glasses, "you might find yourself in the way. Miss Patty probably has considerable sewing to do, in anticipation of a church event which is now conceded to be not unlikely. You see, young man, Alexander—"

This was where the Judge put it brutally plain. Alexander was Judge Moran's clerk. He was going to be Judge Moran's junior partner. He was the town boy who stayed home and stuck to the law. He was fitting into the place the Judge had meant for his own son.



He told exactly what he thought of Bert

And now he was fitting into Bert's place on Patricia's front stoop. No wonder it galled the Judge. But Bert airily declined to be galled.

"Seems to be a right good bit of luck for Aleck," he said, "and he's rising so fast it might hurt him. Maybe I *had* better have a look at Patty,"—as if the

Judge was urging it and had finally convinced him.

Bert did have his look, too, about ten minutes of it, that very morning. He was vigorously cheerful when he got back home, but his mother saw through that as clear as day and knew how forlorn her boy was inside. That he was



wild about Patricia she took for granted. Any abnormally presumptuous young fellow would be.

"She didn't do anything but spat," Bert acknowledged, when no one else was around to hear.

His mother brightened. What else could Patricia do, indeed, if she even remembered Bert—especially if she had any personal feeling about Bert's being away those two years? Besides, they always had quarreled, she and Bert.

"And she had so much to say about Alexander," he added. "Confound her adorable nose, anyhow!"

His mother, to his surprise, cheered up yet more. "About Alexander?" she repeated.

"Darn him, too—yes. You'd think he was a concentrated yeast cake, he's rising so fast. It just regularly enraptures her, how smart Aleck is, and she must've taken a few lines from dad about the law, for—listen, mother—if a man isn't smart enough for the law, it's nothing but downright impudence for him to think he's smart enough to get her."

"Bert," cried his mother, "you don't mean—"

"What, mother?"

"That you *asked* her, like you'd stepped over to borrow some—"

"Allspice, mother? Of course I did. I knew I wanted her, didn't I, soon as I saw her again? Then, you know, it's only right to her to give her as much time as I can spare to think it over, as I told her, but she said she had plenty of other things to think about."

The Judge, when he heard of it, was all frowning exultation—declared it was a lost case before Bert could even plead it. And it did look hopeless for Bert. His job was cut out for him all right, if he wanted Miss Patty. Still, there's no predicting failure about cheerful enterprise like Bert Moran's. Maybe the Judge was counting on it some, too, even if he was so disgusted with Bert's buoyant confidence. Perhaps he thought a little despair was the right seasoning to bring that kettle of fish to the proper turn. The Judge was partly correct about that, for here was Bert coming into the ring against the young lawyer

fellow who'd been in training two years past and was in fine condition to land a knock-out. And here again Miss Patty had drawn the lines of battle to Aleck's own style of game. That is, Bert had to do him up in the law. The Judge didn't mind Bert's getting hurt. The rascal deserved it. But he did hate losing the family's chance at Miss Patty. This was a case where prestidigitating wasn't going to help, he told Bert, but he didn't allow for Bert having a cracking good set of prestidigitating brains. And he didn't allow for Bert's mother being in Bert's corner, either.

Bert's mother maneuvered first. What she did was to send the old Judge toddling as innocent as a babe over to Patricia's father on some neighborhood excuse, and the Judge saw Patricia, just as Mrs. Moran counted on, and everything else went like she counted on. First Patricia politely congratulated the Judge on Bert's success in the world, and that started the Judge at full tilt. He told exactly what he thought of Bert, from first to last, and he was so earnest and sincere about it that Patricia flared up and told the Judge that he was horrid and prejudiced, and said he ought to be proud of Bert, and the Judge came home scowling and puzzled, and muttered something to the effect that he never would get old enough to understand 'em, and even the young ones were an enigma 'way past him. Then Mrs. Moran told Bert to go on over and see Patricia. She didn't think she'd be quite so snappish as she was in the morning.

And Bert went, that same afternoon. He didn't understand 'em any more than his father, but he had sense enough to take the word of one of 'em about another one of 'em, so that it didn't matter much whether he understood 'em or not. Still, he was surprised to find Patricia so sweet. Bert knew then that his mother was the real wizard of the family. It was up to him, though, (and he knew that too), to do the rest, and his wits were geared up 'way beyond the speed limit.

Even when Bert said: "Let's take a walk," Patricia up and said, "Let's," and they did. Patricia couldn't do

enough, in reason, to make up to him for having such an unnatural father. It was spring time, and not quite twilight yet under the maples, and Bert steered her where the strolling was pleasant, but he didn't evade the issue, and steered her past Alexander's.

Alexander lived alone in the old house with the roses that was left him when the last of the family died, and he quite prided himself on his quiet taste as a genteel householder. Everything was tempting, too—lawn and box hedge and roses that fairly daubed the landscape with their bright colors, so that Bert was the bold lad, all right, to lead Miss Patricia within the perfume-bearing zone of such a home-like little nest that belonged to the other fellow.

More than that, he brought her back the same way. He figured that Alexander, up in his study, would see Miss Patricia passing by with some one else, and that that would bring him down. And it did. When they came back, there was Alexander on the lawn, hard at work digging around a bush. It happened that the bush was right near the hedge. Miss Patricia spoke, and Alexander looked up, surprised that anybody was near.

"Fine," cried Bert, "if it isn't Aleck!"

He vaulted the hedge like a grasshopper, just up and over, and was wringing Aleck's hand, while Miss Patricia crinkled her brows and watched them both, the eternal woman over again since the world began. Aleck didn't altogether rise to the joy of the occasion. Maybe he thought Bert was pumping up enough cordiality for the pair of 'em.

"Just the roses the doctor prescribed for Mike here," said Bert, not noticing the strained happiness in Aleck's manner. "I want to give her a few, old man, and as there's no florist's shop—"

Nerve, wasn't it? But before poor, precise, punctilious Alexander could gasp, Bert had out a pair of pocket scissors and was snipping roses right and left and up and down. His assurance was that exasperating, it seemed like downright calculation. If it was, it worked beautiful, for Alexander caught his arm until he could find a few words. Then the words came.

"Hold on!" That was to start with. But once started, they waxed impressive, as became a member of the bar. Alexander merely wanted to state, and he hoped Miss Patricia would understand, that she could have any untold quantities of roses of which he stood possessed, but—and he added it with definitive prophecy—he was going to be the lad to give them to her.

Patricia didn't say a word. She knew that it wasn't her cue. In all the animal kingdom till Kingdom Come, the lady-love stands and waits while the two swains face each other and glare and do what they're going to do. Patricia only looked at Bert. It was his turn.

Bert was visibly astonished. "Why, Aleck," he said, grieved-like, "you mean that I can't have a few of these roses, no matter who or what I want them for?"

"That's it," said Aleck. Then he sidestepped. A glance at Patricia told him that he was in wrong. "You see, Bert," he stumbled, trying to catch at something plausible, "they're—they're my Safronas. There's only this one bush, and they're the prettiest I—"

"Good eye, mine," said Bert. "That's why I want them for Mike."

"Shouldn't wonder," retorted Aleck, smiling, getting cool and obstinate before this easy-going bullying. "But you see, they happen to be mine, you know."

Bert Moran's eyes snapped a wee bit triumphantly. So the lawyer was getting round to the law, was he? Bert had depended on him for that. He was talking possession, was he? Yes, that was the law.

"Suppose," ventured Bert with maddening timidity, "I—I—took 'em anyhow?"

"That," announced Alexander, vastly wearied by such ignorance, "would constitute larceny."

"Oh!" said Bert.

"Petit larceny. The minimum penalty is six months."

"Oh," said Bert, and Patricia was red as a beet.

"Of course,"—Aleck laughed uneasily, because he did not like Patricia to be red as a beet—"I'd never prosecute, not

you, Bert. But you wanted to know what it would be, you know. And I—well, I can't help the law, Bert."

"You a lawyer, too," murmured Bert.

"I said I can't help the law, but Miss Patricia knows I wouldn't invoke it. Not in this case, Bert."

"Still, I've got to have the roses," said Bert.

"You can't," said Alexander. "You'd be a thief."

"In the eyes of the law, Aleck?"

"Of course a court would have to convict you."

"Now, Aleck," said Bert, as if concluding the whole thing, "I'm going to have the roses, but I wouldn't give Mike stolen roses."

"You will, though, if you take them."

"You will have to get a court to say I stole them; you just said so."

"By the gods then," exclaimed Alexander, "I will get a court to say so. Wait; first, I forbid you to take a rose."

"I heard," said Bert. He was already snipping them off, bunching their stems in his hand as he gathered them.

While he was at it, a neighbor or so passed by, and Aleck stopped them for witnesses. Then the Judge passed by. Aleck reddened. But he was game, and invited the Judge in, too. He took pains to tell each of them that he had forbidden the taking of his roses. And they stood and watched Bert Moran taking them. The Judge pursed up his lips. Here was his impertinent child bucking the law of the land, bucking an institution supported by the military forces on land and sea of the United States of America.

Bert dropped a rose. Queer that his legerdemain fingers should be so clumsy! "Oh," cried Patricia, "you've dropped one of the prettiest ones."

"Let Aleck give you that," said Bert, generously.

"Why not yourself, sir?" demanded the Judge. "You're stooping to steal for her; you can stoop for a rose."

Bert shook his head, and the gallant, outraged Judge himself picked up the rose and handed it to Patricia, and Bert's expression for his father was both shocked and pained.

By now having quite stripped the bush of its exquisite buds, Bert held them across the hedge to Patricia, and was on the point of following them when Alexander stopped him.

"Just a minute," he said—he wanted to show himself magnanimous before Miss Patricia. "I'll give you a chance to pay for those roses. That will be an extenuating circumstance. It will save you from conviction for theft. I will charge you," said he, "the pin with which Miss Patricia has just fastened that rose to your lapel."

"Not on your life," said Bert.

"Then one cent in currency," said Aleck.

"Not one cent," said Bert. "Come on, Mike, let's make our get-away."

"You've definitely committed a theft," Alexander called after him.

"Listen here, Alexander," said the Judge, "after saying that, you've got to prove it. Member of my family, sir. I'll have the case advanced on the docket for you. A charge like that can't hang fire—no, sir."

Prior to the decision in open court whether his only son was or was not a larcenous person, the Judge betrayed much more uneasiness than the duly indicted one himself, who betrayed none at all. The Judge was irritable. Something was on his mind. He even went so far as to advise Bert—stating that it was his only advice and more than Bert deserved—to stir around and engage a good lawyer. Bert looked surprised. He would not so humiliate a parent, for when had a Moran ever needed to hire a lawyer? He thanked his parent, but he required no counsel. His case was in competent hands.

With that, the Judge's patience crumbled away beyond all help of broom and dustpan. Bert needn't have the insolence to think that he could fool with the law. It was a thing of solemnity and dignity. It was the bulwark of the rights of the people. It hedged in roses as well as life and money vaults from the errant thief. It was the buckler and glaive of human society.

"You can juggle property on the



Having stripped the bush of its buds, Bert held them across the hedge to Patricia



stage, granted," the Judge warned him, "but don't forget that a court of law is a temple, and that sacrilege is punished more quickly and harshly than theft. No, no, my boy, it's not a mountebank's cart-end for flim-flam. Don't hope to get away there, with any of the light-fingered art of your profession."

"My profession?" said Bert, innocent and wide-eyed. "Why, dad, what a suspicion! Your profession offers so many chances that it never occurred to me to rob by mine."

The Judge looked him over just as scornfully as he could—which was a heap—but something almost pleading got into his voice when he said: "Don't attempt it, Bert. Let some one defend you. If you don't, you're in for a conviction for theft. And, by the Lord, it's got to come to trial, because you've got to be cleared. Let me take your case."

"Oh there, dad," said Bert. "Don't worry. I've got 'em going."

"Going to make an ass of you, you mean."

"Your Honor!" cried Bert. "Oh I know, you've got cold feet. Yes, you have. You're scared stiff thinking I'm going to make the law look like a goat. Well, it's the right hunch, dad. And as for Aleck—poor Aleck, he'll look like an unweaned kid—What's this?" A messenger dropped off a bicycle in front of the house and brought him a telegram, one of several to the same purport. They had sold out the house at the next town. Bert scribbled the reply on the back: "Engagement canceled."

"Breach of contract," commented the Judge.

"Not at all," said Bert. "All engagement for the week after my performance here were made subject to cancellation at my option."

"Then it's bad business," said the disgusted Judge.

"Again, no. There's a much more important engagement to bring about here. I figured on a week to do it."

"You are meaning Miss Patty!" ejaculated the Judge. "What—a week?"

"Why," said Bert, "that's not long. Besides, I don't mind skipping those one-night stands."

"Fiddlesticks," cried the Judge. "After you've made a pitiful fool of yourself in that court-room, Miss Patty will blush to think she ever knew you."

"There was never a deadlier blush," observed Bert, though the Judge had swung on his heel and was gone.

Nevertheless, Judge Moran was a parent, and he continued to hover about his progeny. It was plain that he itched to tell Bert something. Once—the afternoon after the crime committed on the roses—he came on Bert asleep in the hammock, and when he saw a sheep-skin volume tumbled on the ground, its leaves fluttering in the breeze, the temptation on this parent was strong indeed. He had only to turn down a certain page, leave the volume and steal away. Bert awoke. The Judge's nervous hovering filled Bert with secret delight.

"Don't worry, your Honor," he spoke comfortingly. "I'll shift. I'm not like the nigger who prayed to the Almighty when the bear cornered him. I don't want the help. Only, if you want to see a good fight, please don't help the bear. See here, dad"—he sat up—"if you do, I'll make you look like a goat too, in with the rest. You'll be the one convicted of that heinous little larceny thing. See if you're not."

"Bert," said the Judge, getting his breath, "you *are* a clown!" The itching to help his progeny was miraculously allayed.

"I'll tell you what I'll do," said Bert. "If I'm convicted, I am a clown. And in that case, I here and now solemnly give you my word, dad, that I'll follow you and the rest of my ancestors into the law. Yes, I will. For me, it'll be worse than jail. Almost worse than losing Patricia, but you have my word on it, just the same."

"Then," said the Judge fervently, "I hope they'll send you to jail." But, having gazed long and gropingly at Bert over his glasses, he departed, shaking his head doubtfully, mumbling into his double chin.

Bert Moran was well enough liked in our town—none better, for that matter, though from a kid with his black art contraptions he had us all guessing

pretty much of the time. But when it came to being the famous Norambert with the *éclat* and airy superiority of New York and Broadway, he wasn't above being paid back by our town for just that. And besides, when there was this chance to pay back Bert Moran in his own legal tender for what he'd been shoving off on us since he was in kilts, why this town just simply backed up the chance—though you understand there was no malice in it, and we were all going to love him better afterwards. We were some set, too, on showing him he couldn't just drop in and prestidigitate us out of a town girl like Miss Patricia. No, siree!

Then, for all Bert's popularity, and his father's standing, a court of justice was a court of justice, and down to the janitor, it took itself mighty darn serious. *Esprit de corps* is the name for that kind of fanaticism. And with Bert indicted, and arraigned, and those other torturous things, it was tacitly understood by the court—down to the janitor—that this here was an assertion of its own dignity. And there wasn't one, including Judge Moran himself, that wasn't on a hair-trigger to resent any contemptuous airiness from that great and nonchalant Norambert who proposed to steal roses and just yearn for the law of the land to show him what it was going to do about it.

The presiding judge was coached on the situation all right, and he was ready to drop on the accused hard for the first buffoonery or infraction of almighty dignity. The Court was egged on, too, by the prosecuting witness, Alexander, who in spite of a grieved, parental-like, this-is-going-to-hurt-me-worse-than-it'll-hurt-you sort of attitude, couldn't help showing his animus against Bert. He wasn't to be blamed, either, for he'd gotten wind of what Patricia had said about a man having to be smart enough for the law to get her, and wasn't Bert Moran the fellow she'd said it to? And wasn't Bert Moran here in court, as prisoner, proposing to show her that he was that smart, and qualify? Trying to show it against Alexander, too? Oh, Aleck understood the issue flat enough,

and he was meeting it, too. No, we couldn't blame him none.

Well, they called it prosecution. But the town had to own up it was pure, out-and-cut persecution. It was positively vicious. They went after Bert as if he was the real, genuine menace to human society. They wired him, trussed him up hard and tight, in the meshes of the law and the evidence, and there were barbs on the wire. It was absolutely merciless. Bert could get himself tied up on the stage, let a cloth flash down in front of him, and when the cloth flashed up again, there he was free and smiling. But this here law ligature business was some different. It was the prelude to the iron bars, and there was Bert, smiling as brave as could be, till we felt most sorry for him, and Patricia's eyes were snapping indignation at every court in the land and at Alexander quite especial. And it wasn't because Alexander was necessarily working to imply that she'd received stolen goods, either.

By a sort of mutual, unspoken consent Patricia wasn't dragged into it at all. But everybody understood that she was in it most of all, and that she was *the* issue. The State had enough witnesses without her, anyhow, though Bert had none. They all agreed that Bert had taken the roses in the face of the owner's formal prohibition, and Bert in his cross examination only got them to say it more emphatic, describing just how he did it.

Bert was in a ticklish fix, because of contempt of court hanging over him at every move, yet every moment he dared right up to the danger point. Not that he was flippant. No, he was as solemn as an owl, and as deferential to the Court and the prosecution, till even Judge Moran thirsted for his blood. Then, when he called himself as a witness, he played two parts, first his own lawyer, calling himself to the chair, then going to the chair and being sworn, then going back to ask a question, then going back again to the stand to answer the question. And he was so earnest and business-like—I mean, lawyer-like—that there wasn't nothing to hitch a rebuke on.

He asked himself only one question: "Do you admit that you possessed yourself of those roses in the manner in which all the witnesses agree that you did?"

And he answered: "Yes sir, I do."

Instantly Alexander was on his feet, addressing the Court. The prisoner should be censured for putting the county to the cost of a trial. The prisoner had pleaded guilty to the charge as stated in the indictment.

But the prisoner smiled at Alexander for being young and eager. "My client," he replied to the Court as his own lawyer, "has pleaded not guilty to the charge as stated in the indictment."

At that, if Alexander had been Bert, he'd have been jailed for contempt, for when the Court declined to find the prisoner guilty on his own testimony, Alexander was for making a long protest, and had to be doubled into his seat by the sheriff.

Alexander was bound then that he'd see Bert in jail, if not farther, and he got the prosecuting attorney to let him make the prosecuting speech. It was a good speech all right. It did that trussing up I mentioned already.

"Simple larceny," he quoted from an awesome volume, "'is the felonious taking and carrying away of the personal goods of another.'" Then he rubbed it in, even that word "felonious," and made it stick, too, though Patricia's eyes were daggers and her fingers drummed a tattoo on the back of her bench. "Felonious," he told us, means done with intent to commit a crime. Bert had intended to take the roses, did take them, though the owner of them forbade it. So, if that was a crime, then Bert intended a crime. The "*animus furandi*" was therefore proved; nay, admitted by the prisoner on the stand.

The case, said Alexander, though with evident reluctance, was only one of plain theft, or simple larceny. It was, he concluded, "unaccompanied with other atrocious circumstances," though he knew the prisoner would not deny that there would have been had there been any resistance to the act. To this Bert solemnly nodded in the affirmative.

Alexander had lots more to say. Patricia, he was thinking, must be more than ever convinced that he was smart enough for the law, and no lawyer ever had a clearer case. He warned the prisoner that it was useless to plead that there had been no pecuniary advantage to him in taking the property. It was quite enough to constitute larceny if thereby he gratified some wish, and intended wholly to deprive the owner of his property. These points were also abundantly proved.

Asportation—Alexander would not have missed that word for a bushel of roses—or carrying away, being necessary to a felony, was likewise proved and admitted. The accused had conveyed the property off the premises by handing them across the hedge to another person who received them. "'A bare removal from the place in which he found the goods is quite a sufficient asportation,'" quoted Alexander, slamming down the awesome volume with majestic violence.

But why any more eloquence? The threads of Alexander's argument were steel cables, wrapping round and round, till there wasn't anything left of Bert Moran to see below his eyebrows. And he'd have to be a hocus-pocus wonder ever to get out. The town was unanimous about that, and wasn't quite so fond of Alexander as it had been.

Bert rose gravely to speak for the defense. He began by rolling up his coat sleeve. The Court almost exploded, in its desire to hurl the thunderbolt of contempt. For everybody recognized that gesture. It was the great Norambert's gesture. He was going to deal with his audience with perfect honesty and candor. He wanted them to see that he had nothing up his sleeve. But what the rascal had up his sleeve was a plenty. It was his cuff. From the cuff he read:

"This felonious taking and carrying away must be of the *personal goods of another*: for, if they are things *real*, or savor of realty, larceny at the common law cannot be committed on them.'" He looked up, smiling, and talked a few minutes, conversationally. But the judge on the bench, and Judge Moran had the point already.

"In other words," said Bert, "you can't steal real-estate. You can't carry off real-estate. Roses are real-estate. They are attached to the ground. Therefore you can't steal roses. The thing is ridiculous. I venture to be surprised at the learned counsel for the State in consuming the time of this honorable Court and affronting the intelligence of this jury with an absurdity so absolute. If the roses were detached when carried away, or if there had been two acts, one of detaching them, the other of removing them, there would have been the crime of simple larceny. If my client had dropped a rose on the ground, had then picked it up and carried it away, he would be guilty as charged in the indictment. If anyone else"—Bert charitably refrained from looking at his father—"had picked up and removed a rose after the owner's prohibition, that person would be guilty as charged in the indictment. I cannot think of any honorable man so stooping to plain theft for the sake of a rose. Perish the thought! The prisoner awaiting your decision did not do so. The State's own witnesses acquit him of the deed. The prisoner in one act plucked the roses and delivered them where, in the judgment of the prisoner, they would do the most good. For, is it not here written on my cuff:

"And if they are severed by violence, so as to be changed into movables; and, at the same time, by one and the same continued act, carried off by the person who severed them: they never could be said to be taken *from the proprietor*, in their newly acquired state of mobility (which is essential to the nature of larceny), being never, as such, in the actual or constructive possession of anyone, but of him who committed the trespass."

He paused and looked about. His eyes swept the packed court room. But he did not smile. Rather, did he look as serious as when on the night of his return to us he hocus-pocussed a rabbit into an om-

plet in Jed Evans' old hat. For the matter of that he frowned when he perceived one of his fellow townsmen bringing his hands up around in front of him as if to applaud.

As for the judge, he had long since caught the point. And there are those as said they saw the Court wink at him. What he said to himself, of course, nobody knows but whatever it was he hated to do it, no doubt, being, of necessity, "in the premises" as Alexander would have argued, favorable to Bert.

"Now of course," said Bert apologetically, having rolled down his sleeve to show that the entertainment was ended, "though that's the law, the common law, I do not presume to be responsible for it, nor for the boys of this State who hereafter help themselves to watermelons and apples from our farmers. The law is there to protect the honest man or boy. The law is honesty's bulwark, the buckler and glaive of human society, and let all beware how they loosely call a man with a rose or a boy with a watermelon a simple thief or other atrocious appellation. If any desire to use language of the kind, those who make the laws will have to make another law, and alter the law's dictionary; but until they do, the rose on the bush is real estate and to steal it is impossible."

Of course, Bert Moran walked home a free man. No—he walked home with Patricia.

"There's one rose he's stealing, anyhow," said the judge who had presided, nodding his head forward to indicate Patricia.

"Not indictable, sir, not indictable," said Judge Moran, who was taking the other judge home to dinner.

"But," said the other judge, "*she's* not real-estate. *She's* not attached."

Patricia, at this moment, locked her arm in Bert's.

"Eh?" said Judge Moran. "I'm not so sure about that."



# The Little Bride of Heaven

BY MARY IMLAY TAYLOR

Author of "The Ten Cent Baby," "The Magic Teeth," etc.

CARMELITA turned Tomaso over on his back on the soft green turf. Being small and exceedingly fat, Tomaso, like the sea turtle, stayed reversed, waving his arms and legs in helpless protest. But Carmelita heeded him not at all; her mind was free of responsibility, for she knew that once tipped, Tomaso stayed tipped until she chose to pick him up.

"Mamina," she said, "if it waz nod for this bad man, Tomaso, I also could carry wood this year."

Bianca Tadena continued to bind up her huge bundle of fagots. She was a dark pinch of a woman, shabbily dressed in black, with a scarlet apron, bordered in deep blues and yellows. The great pile of broken boughs and underbrush was already twice the size of her slender body, but she continued to bind it skillfully, so that it could balance on her head. As her daughter spoke, she glanced absently at Tomaso, still sprawling turtle-like, and then at her eldest born.

Carmelita had stretched her arms over her own head and was trying to fasten back her wonderful hair—hair that was warm in the shadow and sun-kissed in the light, bewitching, curly, soft as silk. It framed her little, pale, pointed face and the soft, dark depths of her eyes.

They were Venetians. Bianca, widowed in girlhood, had married a second husband after Carmelita's father died and had followed him across the seas, to be bereaved again and left with only Carmelita and the baby, Tomaso, to help her in the struggle of life. She was aged before her time, worn and hollow chested, and she gazed thoughtfully now at her little girl.

"Figliuola mia," she said reluctantly,

in her sweet Italian, "you will not make your *prima comunione* this year. There is not a *centesimo* to pay for the dress, or the veil, or the shoes."

Carmelita's hands dropped to her sides; the beautiful hair escaped and fluttered in the light breeze. The brightness of the spring sky seemed to fade, the tranquil valley below them receded yet farther into its blue mists. Carmelita's sun was obscured.

"Oh," she sobbed, in her adopted tongue, "bud one may nod miss one's First Communion!"

Bianca's thin lips tightened. "Ang! Where is then the dress, the veil, the shoes, the stockings?" she asked dryly.

Carmelita found no answer; she stood as helpless as the supine Tomaso, but her beautiful eyes filled with tears. "Rosa makes id ad Corpus Christi, and Nicoletta and—and Tesita!" she mourned. "I will be lig thad heretig Gretchen!"

"Pazienza! What would you? Rosa and Nicoletta and Tesita have fathers," replied Bianca stolidly. "We? We must eat."

"I will eat nothing ad all, if—if I may bud have the dress!" sobbed Carmelita.

"Then, surely, you would not wear it, *figliuola*," retorted her mother, stooping to lift the fagots. "Help me," she added. "Can I do it all?"

Carmelita, conscience-stricken, ran to help, and the great bundle rose between them to Bianca's head. Looking out from under its immensity, she saw the child's pale face.

"I am desolated, *figliuola mia*," she said softly. "but—*cosà vuole*! We must eat."

This argument was inexorable. Carmelita turned to lift Tomaso to her own

thin shoulder. But she stood a moment, holding him, and looking out over the wide hillside, where the wood sawyers had left only stumps and a low new growth of young maple and hickory. Carmelita bit her lip and winked back the tears. Her great *festa* would be delayed another year; she could not make her First Communion. Then she recalled herself, clasped Tomaso tightly, and ran after her mother. Bianca was already half way down the steep path. Carmelita could not see her; she was only a huge moving bundle of fagots, for the little woman was doubled over beneath them. Even in front one caught only the glint of a scarlet apron and black petticoat. But she descended calmly, sure footed as a mule. Behind her Carmelita came more cautiously, carrying Tomaso. Her little, bare, brown feet clung to the beaten path, instinctively avoiding the stones. The sweet air lifted her beautiful curls, but her cheeks were white, and a tear trickled down her chin. When one is poor, she thought, one may not even have one's religion!

At the foot of the bluff, Bianca stopped for breath. She lifted her worn body a little and drew in the east wind.

"I smell the sea salt," she said softly. "*Dio mio!* It makes me to think of that sweet Venice. The sea lavender, it blooms at home in Italy, Carmelita, and one smells the sea, always the sea!"

The little girl stood still too. "I do remember Venice," she said. "My fathaire—he waz a gondolier, eh?"

"*Altro, yes!*" replied Bianca. "And when he lived, *figliuola*, one had meat, a *brodo* of meat to eat, and *farinata*; now—it is dandelions."

Carmelita choked back a sob. "I would then have made my communion—if my fathaire had lived?"

"*Sì,*" assented Bianca sadly, "*sì,* in that dear Venice. Here it is *miseria*, and they told Giuseppe that the gold, it grew in this America upon a tree. *Ma che!* they have not even figs! And I—I have no man but Tomaso, and he has not yet a tooth! I cannot do it, *figliuola*. I cannot pay for the dress."

Carmelita said nothing. She followed the moving bundle of fagots, and she

held Tomaso tight; one day he would be a man, after he got the teeth, and a man was valuable, if one in the house meant a *brodo* of meat instead of greens and dry, stale bread.

They walked a long way home to their tenement beside the railroad crossing. Carmelita ran up first and put Tomaso on his back again, and returned to help her mother drag the fagots up the crazy outside staircase. The little girl and Bianca did a man's work every day, but it was hard to get the fagots up that narrow stair to the roof. They had to cross that, and go up two more steps to the door of the attic tenement. Beside this, they heaped the wood and Bianca went in to prepare their supper—a dish of dandelion greens and a loaf of stale baker's bread. Tomaso lay asleep on an old cot in the corner, curled up like a creasy, fat puppy.

Bianca ate alone; Carmelita could not taste the food, for she was mourning for the great event that means so much in a little Italian girl's life, the First Communion. She went to the window and crossing her arms on the sill, laid her head down on them and watched the passers-by. Her hair streamed over her arms and rippled on the sill in the evening sunlight. Below, the trolley cars sped past; the newsboys cried their papers; the busy crowd chattered and chaf-fered at the open stands outside the little markets. A cloud of blue railroad smoke hung like a veil over New Haven, pierced here and there by a keen spire. It was high tide, and beyond the bridge the water crept up in little pools like lagoons, with an island or a peninsula dividing the currents at intervals. An old white goat was stranded on one; on another an older woman picked up mussel shells and snails; some boys waded nakedly along the edge. On the window-sills of the tenement, the marvel of Italian window gardening blossomed here and there, amid the black grit of the squalid atmosphere; big sweet peppers bloomed contentedly in old tomato cans, and celery sprouted in lard pails.

"Carmelita, here then is the sardine that Mona Lisa gave to you," said Bianca coaxingly. "Will you eat that?"

"I will eat nothing if I may bud get my dress," said Carmelita. "My heart eet is broke."

"You cannot have it," said Bianca tersely, but in her heart, she too, shed tears. "She would have made a *bella figura*," she said sadly to herself, "with her beautiful hair, the *poverina*! But what can one do—with two *bambini*? After all, one must eat."

But Carmelita went out abruptly and descended. On the lowest step of the outside staircase she sat down. The yard was exceedingly small and dirty and the gate stood open on the railroad crossing. Through it Carmelita saw the cinders and the ties, and the police station, where the light of Number Two's red lantern began to flicker. On her knees was the tin plate with the last sardine in Mona Lisa's discarded can. But Carmelita had no appetite; she wished, indeed, that white dresses and veils came in cans. It was at this moment that Pharos, the Greek newsboy, appeared. He looked in at the open gate—saw the sardine, the tin plate and, at last, Carmelita.

"*Felice* evening," said the latter softly, falling between her mother's sweet Italian and her own American English; she deeply admired the slim, young Greek and he knew it.

He nodded. "You ead de fish, Carmelita?"

She looked down, reddened and thrust the plate out. "You lig—sardines, Pharosio?"

"Me take id, eh?"

She nodded this time, deeply flattered by his advances.

He took it, tilted his head back, opened his mouth to its fullest extent, and slowly, very slowly, engulfed the delicacy, skin, tail and all. Meanwhile, Carmelita gazed in adoring wonder at the beautiful Greek head of the cormorant. Her feminine heart worshiped the masterful appropriation of the supper; unselfishness is always a drug on the market.

"Did id to tasta good, Pharosio?" she asked meekly.

The Greek eyes looked at her tenderly. "Id waz vaire nize lig—lig you

ees, Carmelita," he replied diplomatically.

She reddened shyly; it gave her a thrill to be compared even to a sardine by the Adonis of Grand Avenue. "I'm sorry thad I have bud ona," she sighed. "To-morrow, mebbe—Mona Lisa, she gave me the box. She said: '*Carmelita mia*, you may to have thad; they made Gorgio verra seck.'

Pharos, far from recognizing the risk of Mona Lisa's benefits, edged himself into the corner of Carmelita's step. "You ees vaire nize, I theenk," he said.

Carmelita dropped the tin plate; her long eyes glowed, but a doubt stung her. "You think thad I'm nize—same ez Rosa?" she asked, quivering with fear.

But the Greek avoided the pitfall. "Vaire nize—more nize than anybodee ad all," he affirmed.

"When I have the sardines?" she flashed back, suspiciously.

Pharos, the materialist, dissembled. "All de time, same lig you ees now."

She pulled one hand through the other in an agony of embarrassment.

"I lof you," climaxed the sardine eater grandly. "And—and alway I haf lofed de leedle feesh in de can."

Carmelita hung her head; the abruptness of the declaration outbalanced the accentuation of the sardines. She trembled with pride. Pharos had always been a beau of Rosa Palmieri's, and Rosa was a beauty. Pale little Carmelita sighed ecstatically.

Pharos regarded her critically, wondering if there had really been only one fish in the can. Thus are we sometimes deceived by our admirers.

"You haf been cryin'," he observed at last.

She nodded, again winking back the tears.

"Whad for? Sardines?"

"I cannod make my first communion; I have no money yet to buy the dress," she sobbed.

"Whad you mean? I aint lig you—Catholeeck," he said slowly.

"You are in Schism, the *padre* says so. You'll go to *Purgatorio* and stay—stay there!" she wailed, inconsolable at the thought.

"I aint afeard," he retorted stoutly. "I aint scairt lig you ees, Carmelita." Then his eye caught the soft beauty of her bowed head. "Why you nod sell your hair?" he asked.

She stopped crying. "Whad you meana now?"

"De man whad maikes de wigs in Court Street, he saw your hair ad de winder to-nighd, an' he says: 'I vill gif seex dollars for thad hair.'"

Carmelita caught his arm excitedly. "Whad you meana? Seex realla dollars?"

He nodded.

"Seex dollars?" She drew a long breath. "You ees sure, Pharosio? You aint dreamt id?"

"Search me!" said the Greek grandly. "He said id to me righd out in front," he pointed, "an' he gif me a dime ter tell you."

Carmelita rose. "Take me!" she cried, breathless.

Her admirer stared. "Whad for?"

"To sella my hair."

He rose feebly, a little startled.

"Seex dollars," said Carmelita solemnly, "is, ad once, a fortune."

"No-o-o," doubted Pharos. "Your hair id ees so—so beautiful!"

"Then, mebbe, he'll pay more!" she cried. "Come—hasten, Pharosio!"

Her passionate haste carried him as far as the little dingy doorway on Court Street, but there he stood. He could not go in to see the deed done; instead he rubbed one foot slowly up and down the other leg, his great dark eyes fastened on the "transformations" in the window. To him they looked uncommonly like bird's nests.

Within, Carmelita trembled, her long hair loose on her shoulders, while the old wig-maker felt of it, admired it, hesitated. He was tempted; it was so beautiful, so rare a shade. But it seemed to the little girl a century of agony before he made up his mind and the shears snapped, while the soft curls fell. She shut her eyes; she could not look. When she emerged at last she felt light headed, but in her hands were six new dollar bills.

"Pharosio," she gasped, "I—I will

make my First Communion. I have here the dress, the shoes, the veil!"

But Pharos, the Schismatic, merely stared at the little shorn head. He stood one speechless moment; then the enormity of his crime, in taking her there to be despoiled of her beauty, overwhelmed him; he turned and fled. Carmelita, smitten with sympathetic panic, ran to the show window and peeped in; reflected there was an appalling vision of a white face, a long, thin neck and a little shorn head.

"Madonna!" she sobbed, "I look lig thad goose in the rain!"

She clasped the money tight and ran, sobbing, down Grand Avenue. At the foot of the crazy staircase she called.

"Mamina! Mamina!"

But no one answered; instead she heard voices. She climbed up, breathless, clasping her spoils. It was old Beppo, the landlord, clamoring for two month's rent. Bianca stood, clasping Tomaso; in the corner sat old Mrs. Sitnisky, the Polish woman, whose husband advertised that he second-handed the clothing of Yale, in the little shop on the first floor.

"I cannot pay," said Bianca, "not until the oysters are shucked again next week. You will wait, *Signor*?"

"*Ma che*, no! You pay or go. Three dollars, Bianca, I will no longer wait for those cysters," thundered Beppo.

Bianca began to cry.

Old Mrs. Sitnisky held up her finger. "Waid now, Meester Bepposky."

"No!" said Beppo, shaking his fist. "The money. Would your husband wait? *Ma che*, no. He is a tight wad!"

Carmelita stood quite still; she felt the chill of loss again. The shoes, the dress, the veil—they all receded.

"Mamina," she said softly, "here ees three dollars."

Bianca stared at her, dazed. She could not understand. It was Mrs. Sitnisky who took the money and paid Beppo. When he went away, Carmelita slipped down on the floor, sobbing.

"Where you get that money?" demanded Bianca, her stunned brain grasping no more than the miracle of the money.

The old Polish woman came over and



tried to raise the child from the floor. "Vy you cry now?" she asked kindly. "Vy you cry vhen you do so much, leedle one?"

Carmelita cowered lower, her poor little shorn head in her arms. Only three dollars left—and her hair gone!

Bianca suddenly put down Tomaso. "Carmelita," she said sternly, "where you get that six dollars?"

"De cheeld ees crying," said Mrs. Sitenisky, "and look budt ad her headt. Vhat you do mid her hair, Bianca?"

Bianca bent down and looked at the little cropped head.

"Carmelita!" she shrieked, recoiling in horror. "Where have you been? *Dio mio*, but you are a fright!"

"I—I sold id, *Mamina*!" sobbed Carmelita. "I sold id for seex dollars for my dress and my veil and my shoes for the *Prima Comunione*. Now I have only the three"—she wept again—"I—I cannod have my dress, and—an' I look lig thad goose in the rain."

Bianca sat down and covered her worn face with her scarlet apron. "*Poverina*!" she sobbed. "*Poverina*, it was your hair, your beautiful hair, that pays our rent! *Dio mio*, what then did I come to this sad land for? That dear Venice, that dear Venice, it would not have been so there!"

Carmelita came nearer and laid her head on her lap. "*Mamina, Mamina*!" she sobbed.

The old Polish woman crept out softly. Many times had she seen the little Brides of Heaven, many times had she thought of her own little daughter, lying in the cemetery across the sea. She went down-stairs and into the second-hand shop. She went back to an old hair trunk in the cellar. Then like a guilty thing she watched the crazy outside staircase. She watched a long time, for it was morning when Carmelita and Bianca went out again, Bianca carrying Tomaso. The night had brought some comfort; the rent was paid and the hair would grow again. Besides, it was Saturday; they would gather greens for Sunday and, perhaps—perhaps, a candle to the Madonna and the dress and the veil might come; the shoes and the stockings

Carmelita could get with her three dollars.

But poor Carmelita, her close-cropped little head provoked a laugh here, a gibe there. The child shivered with embarrassment, and once she thought she saw Pharos looking around a corner at her—Pharos, who had eaten her sardine and betrayed her to the shears.

"*Mamina*," she said softly, "do I look just lig thad goose in the rain?"

Bianca glanced at her keenly—at the small, pale face, the great, pathetic eyes. "No," she said, "no, you look now like the little angel in the picture in the church in that dear Venice."

Carmelita's face broke into smiles. "*Mamina*," she said, "you think, mebbe, some one might lig me now without my hair?"

"*Si*," replied Bianca absently, "*si*, in that dear Venice. If we can but find money for the dress, *Carmelita mia*, we most surely have the shoes and the stockings."

"Eef I burn a candle?" suggested Carmelita.

Bianca nodded. "It is five *centesimi*, but the Madonna knows we are poor."

That night, when they climbed the stair, Carmelita opened the door. She went in first, her mother following with the baby. As Bianca came in she heard a little cooing cry, like a happy pigeon's. The little girl was on her knees by the cot. On it lay a little, quaint, old, white dress, slightly yellowed by time, the edges scalloped with strange embroidery, and with it a new square of white curtain net and a little, tight wreath of white roses, worn and crumpled and old fashioned, but a wreath of roses.

"Surely it is the dress and the veil!" said Bianca.

Carmelita crossed herself, her little shorn head bowed low. "Id ees the Madonna," she whispered, "the Madonna herself only!"

Below stairs, the old Polish woman wiped away a tear.

"Rachel, she vould haf vished id," she said. "Rachel, she vas one to lof all, and ef they nod know that id ees me, den they ees pleased."

Very beautiful dawned the great day. The sweet voices of the choir filled the air with the chanting. The solemn procession came out of the dim vestibule of St. Michael's in Wooster Place, and wended its way along the grimy New Haven streets. The sixteen little boys and the twelve little Brides of Heaven, each in a white dress and a white veil and white stockings and black shoes, and in their hands the flowers for the Virgin. Twelve little brides, and Rosa Palmieri and Carmelita walked at their head, and Pharos the Schismatic sat on the curb to watch. Early that morning he had brought the white daisies to Carmelita.

"You ees just ez pritty lig you waz—even without de hair," he said softly.

And Carmelita's cup was full.

"She waz de prittiest of all de leedle maids," said Mrs. Sitnisky to Bianca, "in thad white dress."

Bianca wiped away a happy tear. "Thad dress," she said softly, "thad dress waz a miracle, thad we know; the Madonna, she gif it to the *bambina* herself."

"Eh?" exclaimed Mrs. Sitnisky, wondering.

"Id waz a miracle," repeated Bianca, and Carmelita looked back and smiled. "*Quanto è bella*—much it is beautiful," the mother added tenderly. "Only a miracle could gif id to us!"

Old Mrs. Sitnisky watched the little Brides of Heaven down the long, busy avenue, and a tear gleamed in her dark eyes; she was thinking of Rachel, in that far-off little grave beyond the seas. She took Tomaso tenderly from Bianca's weary arms and held him up to see.

"Carmelita, she ees a good cheeld," she said gently, "and Lof—thad ees de miracle vhat gif to you de communion dress."

## Panginan

BY LIEUT. HUGH JOHNSON, U. S. A.

Author of "Fate's Fandango," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY P. V. E. IVORY

THE plaza at San Joaquin was a troubled sea of humanity, fed constantly by streams of people pouring in along the roads from the stricken South. Bullock carts piled precariously with household gear, cursing drivers, frightened women with children at their skirts, garrulous old men, and boys fought for leeway in the crowd, and the glow of burning villages tinged the sky at their backs with red. All day the rattle and roar of machine-guns and rifle-fire across the trenches at Taalac had urged them on, but now they turned their faces toward the flare of their burning homes and sullen anger began to top their fears. The night-firing had ceased.

In the plaza, exaggerated tales of the terrible atrocities of the American troops

were rife, and harried by these and its own cries, the crowd surged toward the *presidencia*.

"To the *casa municipal*—to the *presidencia*—*prisoneros Americanos*—" Later, these gave place to clamorings for blood and death.

"Di-ya-a-a—Di-ya-a-a—" they yelled, and, "Mer-tay-y—"

Those in the front ranks, pressed hard against the bars by the craning of the crowd in the rear, could see, in the gloom of the cells of the municipal prison, tall figures that moved about among the native prisoners, or stood in tired attitudes—backs to the wall—inspecting the yammering mob with interest.

These, then, were the American captives, and there was nothing terrifying

in their aspect, but—there were the red splotches in the sky, and the clamoring grew louder. One of the Americans, a mere boy, laughed as he talked to two big, scraggly-bearded men. This enraged the mob, but the fourth captive gave more cause for exultation. He was a tall man, extremely bowed of shoulder as very slender men sometimes are. He wore heavy-lensed glasses that made his pale face seem even more delicate than it really was. Just now, he was crouching behind two squatting natives in an ecstasy of abject fear.

The cell was sweltering and foul with odors and the voice of the mob sounded through it like the drone of waters. The young prisoner looked at the slender man pityingly.

"Aw, Dunwoody," he pleaded for the tenth time, "don't make a confounded ass of yourself. Can't you see it only makes 'em wilder? They'll be tearin' the bars down and comin' in, next. Anyway it's disgraceful—the way you act. It—it aint no way to treat the rest of us."

He paused, and the prisoner called Dunwoody seemed to be making an effort to control himself. He raised his eyes to the yapping crowd outside, but immediately lowered them and cowered back. The boy stooped over him and the bearded men tried to restrain him.

"It aint no use, kid," they said; "let him alone—he's just a plain *scrub*." But the boy spoke again.

"Aw, buck up, Dunwoody," he pleaded. "They aint a-goin' to hurt you. Aw, come on now, Dun—be a man. Look at Hoskins—look at Pardee. Be a man, can't you, Dunwoody?"

Dunwoody simply shook his head.

"I can't bear to *look* at them," he tried to explain. "It's just that I can't look at them—their snarling faces and the sharp bolos. When I see them, I can *feel* them, Cutler— Oh, I tell you I can *feel* them now—cutting and grating in my arms—my neck—my stomach! Oh, I can't look—I can't—I can't— Oh, *damn*—!" He sank clear to the floor.

Agile little men had climbed up in the windows and now hung there, rattling the bars and snarling like vicious apes. From without, some one threw a

bolo that struck the stone wall above Pardee's head with a vicious "*ptick*" and slithered, quivering, to the floor. The doors vibrated under the ponderous blows of a heavy ram. The murmur of the crowd rose to a roar of expectancy. The boy walked back to his comrades.

"It aint a-goin' to be long now, I reckon," he said, evenly.

"No—not long," echoed Hoskins. "I told you they wasn't no use—foolin' with Dunwoody. Just a plain scrub—too bad, aint it?"

"If they get in," said Pardee, "we want to stay together and—"

There was a clatter of hooves on the tiles outside. A little brown officer, resplendant in aiguillettes, forced his pony into the crowd and a squad of *insurrecto* soldiers began to clear the courtyard.

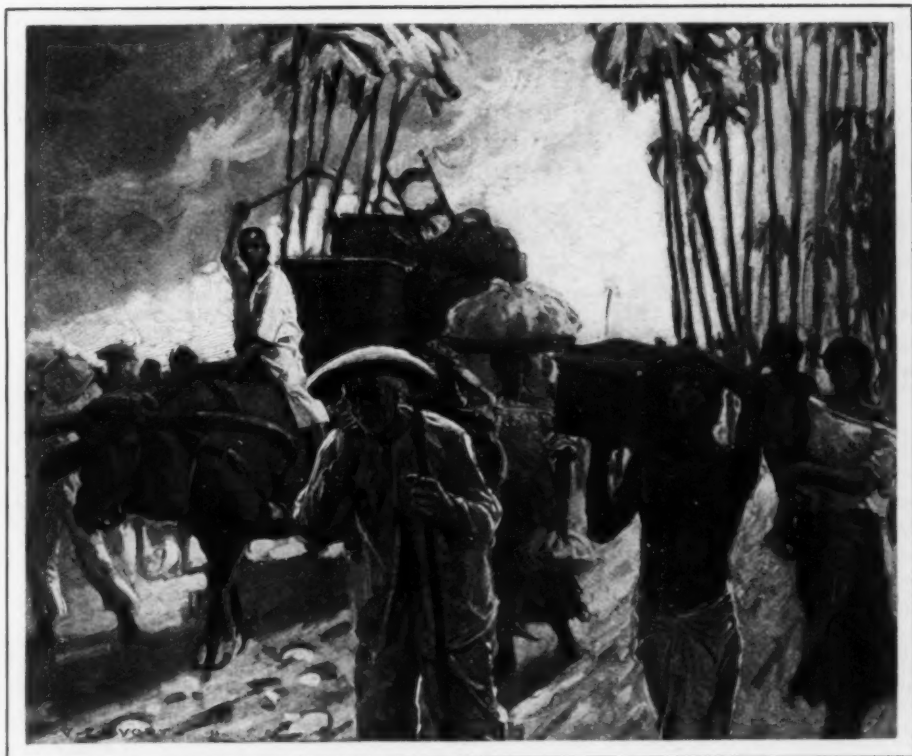
"Might have known *that*," growled Hoskins, when only the retreating clamor of the mob could be heard. "Might have known Aguinaldo aint a-goin' to let his only prisoners of war be chopped up by a bunch of *taos*. We're campaign literchoor—we're for exhibition—that's what we are. Aint it flossy?"

"He was mighty slowsome about it *that* time," said Pardee ruefully. "I was gettin'—well—*anxious*."

They all grinned and Cutler walked over to Dunwoody, who sat with shamed and averted face.

Before dawn, firing in the south again began, but the American prisoners, under a strong guard, were marched beyond hope of recapture. Curious people eyed the convoy from the windows of the stilted shacks along the roads. At the outskirts of the larger towns the convoy was met by bands and committees of ceremony which conducted the captives in a sort of triumphal parade. Thus they were passed from town to town—from prison to prison—for the heartening of the people in the cause of the Insurrection. Sometimes, they were treated well and sometimes they were abused. At last they came to Panginan, far from the seat of war, and there the Governor received them in his office.

He was a primitive little Malay, that Governor. What he knew of the rules of war, he did not approve and they both—



Sreams of people pouring in along the roads from the stricken South

ered him little. He glared at his prisoners from small, high-set eyes.

"If it were not for orders," he confided glibly, "I would hang you up on the door-beam and fill you with red-pepper."

Dunwoody blanched, and the Governor noticed it. He moved threateningly closer to Dunwoody.

"Perhaps I will anyway," he said.

The cell at Panginan was a cesspool packed with murderers, traitors, and native prisoners of the rebel government. The filth was beyond belief; the air was heavy with rank and terrible odors.

The Governor's orders evidently did not prohibit mental torture, for he spent his idle moments devising new and ingenious torments. He called the Americans almost daily to his office, but it was Dunwoody whose terror seemed to please him most.

The prison room was dimly lighted, and not at all ventilated, by small, high-set windows, one group of which looked out on a walled court-yard, and, beyond that, on the mountains toward the China Sea. Here, Cutler, more agile than the rest, used to climb and sit for hours, watching the dead green of the jungle, where it stretched from the low wall to the base of the distant mountains, and across them, in fading color, to the coast.

One day, as he was about to clamber down, he stopped, his eyes riveted on the upper sill. Presently he gave a low whistle of surprise and then, seeing that half a hundred eyes were turned his way, he carried the note on nervously through a crude extemporization and dropped to the floor. He had made an amazing discovery. That night he lay next to Pardee on the floor and, when the cell was



silent, told of it in almost voiceless words.

"The bars—" he whispered. "They're loose. I could jerk the middle one out with my little finger. The window fronts on the jungle and once we get there—well, Olongapo is beyond those mountains—the Navy's there, you know. It's a cinch for us—"

"Us *three*—" whispered Pardee as he glanced up at the barred square of sky.

Day by day, Cutler, Pardee and Hoskins hoarded up their little portions of fish and rice, and day by day, they elaborated their plans of escape. The excitement of this neutralized the Governor's efforts for all save Dunwoody—in whom they had not confided. Since the night at San Joaquin, Hoskins and Pardee had ostracised Dunwoody and even Cutler feared to jeopardize the plan of escape by including him. The constant mental strain and the horror of his surroundings had told on Dunwoody. He was shaken with fever and he had lapsed into a state of morose silence. Toward the end, Cutler relented.

"It's a low Irish trick—leavin' him," he said, "and he's from my town—"

"I wouldn't brag about it," interrupted Pardee.

"—from my town. And maybe he aint so responsible. You see he's been *raised* different. He's a preacher, you know—or was before he enlisted. He says that it aint so much bein' afraid as it is that he *thinks* about it, all the time—says that he *sees* visions of himself, all shot an' cut to pieces—actually *sees* 'em. Says it makes him sick. I guess it'd make anybody sick that way. That's *it*—not so much afraid as *sick*—really *sick*."

"Aint afraid?" grunted Pardee. "And he's a *preacher*— Well, if *that* aint the limit!"

On the day they had set for their break, Cutler got a glimpse of Dunwoody's daily terror. The Governor sent for them together. The shutters of the room had been drawn, but the gloom was lightened by a fire of coals in the corner. The glow lightened to a sinister semblance—the faces of two or three bare-chested little brown men, intent on something heating in the brazier. The

Governor called Dunwoody to him. He was seated cross-legged on the floor near the corner. Suddenly his voice rasped.

"You have information about the American troops. *Where* are they?"

It was so absurd a pretense that Cutler grinned. Dunwoody only gasped and shook his head.

"You refuse to speak—eh?" The Governor made a swift gesture, and the bare-foot men shuffled forward, the spitting points of the glowing irons singeing their faces. There was a shriek as of physical pain and Dunwoody was on his knees at the Governor's feet, begging.

"No, they didn't hurt him," Cutler explained to his comrades in the cell, "but I'd rather die a hundred times than go through what he did to-day—and so would he. We've *got* to take him. I wouldn't leave a dog to this."

A rumble of dissent sounded.

"All right—*whose* scheme is this, anyway? He goes or I stay, too, and you can just chew on *that*."

Dunwoody's jaw dropped when Cutler told him the plan. He was nervous and uncertain.

"Is there much—ah-h—danger in this?"

"Danger, *hell*!" exclaimed Cutler in disgusted surprise. "Is that all you think about?"

"Oh no,"—hastily. "I'm a little sick—that's all. The guard—you know it's armed with rifles, is it not?"

"I don't know and I don't care a whcop. Will you be ready at twelve?"

"Oh, yes—I can't be left alone—I can't. I couldn't stand it—*alone*."

"Look here," said Cutler, angrily. "What the devil's the matter with you; isn't there *anything* to you? Do you like *this*?"

Dunwoody waited thoughtfully.

"I *wish* I could make you understand," he said earnestly. "I imagine too much. I *think* too much and I see visions. It's horrible. I can't shut my eyes and stop it. I don't know what to do. I don't care if I'm *killed*—not a bit. I wish it would come. So I don't think I'm a coward—*quite*. But torture and mutilation— Do you understand a little?"

"No," said Cutler frankly, "I don't



Here Cutler used to sit for hours watching the dead green of the jungle

and I don't want to— Will you be ready at twelve?"

The guard in the corridor dozed on his stool. The oil lamps in the cell sputtered and burned out. A little breeze was rustling in the *papayas* outside and the *chorale* of a million night-singing insects throbbed in the air. There was a slight stir in the dark heaps on the cell floor; a figure heaved up and stood against the wall; another stooped below it, and the grey square of the window was darkened for a moment—no more. Cutler had slept near Dunwoody and he now tried to rouse him from a feigned slumber.

"Hoskins is already out. Pardee is next—and then it's your turn," he was whispering.

The second figure was clambering si-

lently up the wall. Something in the corridor grated against the tiles. The figure dropped, and Dunwoody felt Cutler's hand forcing him to the floor. Five—ten minutes passed and Dunwoody's pulses sang in his temples. Cutler rose cautiously.

"It wasn't anything," he whispered. "There goes Pardee; come on—"

Dunwoody's heart seemed beating in his throat. He was trembling and icy though the night was suffocating. He tried to move, but his limbs were dead and unwilling. His mind was working feverishly, conjuring up a grisly succession of pictures—rifle flashes in the dark—men stumbling through the jungle. He clutched his throat to erase them by the sheer pain of choking, but the limit of his mental endurance had been reached and passed. Cutler gripped his

shoulder. Then came panic. From a great distance he heard a voice—his own voice—crying frantically.

"Guards—guards—guards!" Shame burned him even then. "The Americans are escaping!"

The cell awoke in a swarm of activity. The corridor filled. Cutler leaped for the window, but was dragged back by envious hands. A fusillade of shots crackled in the court. There was a yell of triumph from the soldiers and that was all.

Toward morning, Cutler came over to where Dunwoody sat gazing dumbly at the blank wall.

"I been thinkin' what to say to you," he began, holding his manacled hands before him. "Nothin' fit comes, I aint got the education. You've murdered Hoskins an' Pardee, I s'pose. I reckon you think there aint no punishment. I did think of killin' you, but I wont. I thought of somethin' else. I read a book about a man once an' they took his country away from him—'The Man Without a Country'—that was the book. It was terrible. There was another man. You ought to know about him—you *Preacher*. His name was Judas and it's been a curse for nineteen hundred years. I'm not goin' to die in these prisons. I'm goin' to live to do just one thing. I'm goin' to make your name a curse on the lips of your people forever. Judas killed himself, but *you* wont. No, you'll live—like a starved, kicked dog. When you're seein' pictures—when you're *thinkin'* too much—just think about that. If what you told me is true—" The boy turned away.

## II

From Sapongba, northward, the trail runs through a country of staring rice paddies—low dykes—blind-hot in the searing, dry-season sun. One day, when the dusty fronds of the banana palms wilted in the heat and the carabao panted like dogs in the vanishing mud-wallows along the trail, a ragged little Filipino *Sargento* marched a ridiculous convoy of prisoners along the road. There were two of them, gaunt, pasty-

faced white men, moving at painful pace and urged on by blows from the rifle stocks of the diminutive soldiers who brought up the rear.

The road debouched on a treeless plain where the ten-foot Cogon grass, sere and crisp, hissed in the fiery little breezes that lashed up from the barren sand beyond. The *Sargento* lowered his hat-brim as he came under the open sun, but the white men recoiled as though from the heat of a furnace. One of them staggered a little as he raised his eyes to the glare. He stopped suddenly, gave a dry gulp of pain and slumped abruptly to the sand. The other hesitated as though about to speak, but drew back quickly—he was Dunwoody. One of the barefoot soldiers stood over the boy on the ground.

"*Sigue!*" he grunted fiercely and brought the butt of his rifle sharply against the bent back. Cutler straightened with pain, but made no move to rise. The sergeant walked wearily back. He took the rifle from the soldier and brought it down heavily upon the prostrate figure.

"Oe-enkh!" he yelled. It was the call of the bullock drivers and he struck viciously each time he uttered it. Cutler rolled to his side and lay snarling like a trapped animal. Dunwoody addressed him for the first time in almost a month.

"Cutler—" A glance from the boy's feverish eyes stopped him. The sergeant began thrusting the gun-barrel sharply into Cutler's ribs. Dunwoody was unable to endure the sight of this. He laid a detaining hand on the Filipino's arm.

"You will kill him," he said in Spanish. "The Little Capitan, Emilio, will have something to say to you *then*, perhaps—in the way of thanks."

The sergeant struck at Dunwoody. It was no part of Aguinaldo's policy to kill American prisoners. Cutler had by now scrambled to his feet.

"You keep your mouth out of my business," he said angrily to Dunwoody. "I wouldn't have gone another step. Now I've got to. I wont take nothin' from you an' it aint no use your tryin'."

Dunwoody looked away and quietly took up the march.



A man bowed against a leaden sky, and struggling with a terrific burden that he was dragging across a dreary waste of little hills



They made slow progress across the Bamban flats. Cutler's trail was the trail of a drunken man, and in the village of Pallean he fell on the floor of the jail in a dead stupor. When he rose, he was gibbering in delirium. An excited keeper ran to the *Presidencia* with the news. After a time, a self-important little native doctor bustled into the room, deposited a black case on the floor, opened it with a flourish and knelt by Cutler.

"*Malomalomalo*—bad—very bad—" he murmured as he felt Cutler's pulse, and "*malomalomalo*," he repeated as he ran his hands over the boy's forehead and temples. He flurried busily about the cell, then closed his case with a snap and bustled out. The next morning the *Presidente* sent for Dunwoody.

"The Filipino Government," he said, "has decided on a magnanimous course. You are released. Your comrade is released. Here is your safe-conduct. Make the best of your way to the American lines."

"But my comrade is not fit to be moved," protested Dunwoody.

"Be thankful for what is so graciously accorded you—and leave the town before eight o'clock."

When he reached the jail, Cutler was already sitting on the curbing, a sergeant at his side.

"We're released," began Dunwoody. "We're going home."

Cutler lurched into the street.

"Home," he murmured vacantly, "—home." And his voice took up a tuneless song of the volunteers—"It's home, boys, home— It's home that I would be—"

The Filipino sergeant grinned.

"There's an American company at Florida, Colorado," he jeered. "You can make the march—*perhaps*. Better get your carrion out of town while it can walk." Dunwoody straightened as though he had been struck. The meaning of their release became very clear to him. The street seemed to waver beneath his feet. The crazy shacks spun about in a mad rout.

Weeks in foul prisons under a constant mental strain of terrific intensity had done their work. Dunwoody had be-

come a mere machine of nerves and muscles, propelled by will. Day by day the words of Cutler's threat had borne more heavily upon him until their import had become a menace deeper than death—to be forever branded as the most despicable of cowards, the blackest of traitors. His burden had already become a part of him. The hope of its lifting had never occurred to him. Now it was taken away so suddenly that he was shocked and dizzy. Cutler was about to die—to die and take what Cutler alone, of all Americans, knew, to death with him. But, perhaps, after all, Cutler would *not* die.

He was permitted to feel relief scarcely an instant, for a sinister thought came to him at once. He tried to repel it. He shuddered under it. It only became clearer and more definite. "*There is one thing that profits me more than anything else in the world—Cutler must die.*"

Good and Bad are so thrown into the innermost of human make-up that individual case balances with individual case. There results the nine ninety-nine of the thousand—an "*average man*." Dunwoody had fought with fear at Panginan. He fell as not one of the nine ninety-nine would have fallen—utterly.

"*Cutler must die—*"

The thought was wholly repugnant to him. Cutler was his charge. The slight neglect, the failure to strain himself to the uttermost, that would have freed him from his fate, would not present themselves as impulses to Dunwoody's mind. Had he been alone he would have crawled into some field, for he was at the sheer edge of his endurance. Had he been without the awful suggestion of his thought, he could not have forced himself to the effort that he made.

He laid a hand on the delirious boy's elbow and guided him down the narrow, filthy street and out upon the blistering road to Florida.

It was a nightmarish tramp, that journey to Florida. Dunwoody does not know whether the dwindling white trail that waved before him like a ribbon in the wind, stretched for a mile or a million, or whether he sat for one night or

many under the broad leaves of a banana palm, watching a fevered face in the ghastly starlight. Cutler had not recognized him since Pallewan. He had to bear almost all the boy's weight, and it was really early the next morning (Florida is only ten kilometers from Pallewan) that he felt himself shoved weakly aside and turned to look into Cutler's eyes, alive, now, with anger and intelligence. The boy's fever had left him. He sank to the ground from sheer weakness, but his mind was almost normal.

"You currish, cowardly dog!" he said slowly. "What are you doing—What do you *think* you're doing?" Before Dunwoody could answer, he burst out: "Go away and leave me. If you don't, I'll kill you when I can. You think that after this I wont tell, don't you?"

Resentment stung Dunwoody.

"If I had left you at Pallewan, you would be dead now," he said, almost gently. "Ycu don't know what you are talking about."

"You're a liar—there's nothing vile that you *aint*—"

But Dunwoody, with rising anger, spoke on.

"If I'd left you, no one would ever have known about—about—about Panginan. Do you suppose I did not think of that? If I left you now, you would die, you would surely die, and no one would ever know—"

Dunwoody was becoming a little flighty, himself, and Cutler mistook the meaning of his droning tentative tone.

"You *said* you think too much, and you do. By thinking all that—what you're thinking now—you make yourself a murderer by leavin' me. *That* aint necessary—that murder aint. Mebbe I will die after all. But I wouldn't go a step with *you* helping me anyway—so it aint necessary to commit that *thinkin'* murder here. Go on—free of *that* murder by *not thinkin'*."

The effort of this speech was too much for Cutler. He fell over in a dead faint.

Cutler's delirium had been a blessing to Dunwoody for it kept the sick man

on his feet. Now, he was a limp, leaden burden. Dunwoody staggered toward him and tried to lift him. It was quite beyond his power. Near the ruins of a sugar mill at the road-side, he found a broken bamboo sled. Upon this, with a final effort, he rolled Cutler. With that effort, the will that kept his mind sane left it like the mesmeric power that held M. Valdemar.

The rest of his memories consist only of a *detached* dream—of a man bowed against a leaden sky, and struggling with a terrific burden that he was dragging across a dreary waste of little hills, stopping sometimes to raise his face to the sky and cry out: "Not guilty—your honor—not guilty," and sometimes to adjust the burning shoulder strap of his load; always toiling on toward an indefinite goal at infinity.

Some place on the road a cavalry patrol found them raving at each other in the delirium of fever.

A convalescent sat in a wheel chair on the veranda of the Second Reserve Hospital, looking out at the purpling waters of the Bay as the sun sank behind the Zambalesian mountains. It was Dunwoody, and the fear of the reception that might await him beyond the hospital walls had retarded his recovery. He turned wearily at the sound of a footstep behind him, but he stood up tense and rigid when he saw the face of his visitor. Neither of them spoke during several seconds of embarrassed silence; then Dunwoody said:

"For Heaven's sake, Cutler—Get it over. Have you done it? How—what—that at Panginan."

Cutler, too, was, seemingly, at a loss for words.

"It aint gratitood, Dunwoody," he finally managed, "though I'm grateful enough. But—Well—I've been tryin' to figure you out. I've figured out—what you done at Pallewan. It flabbergasted me, Dunwoody. I guess I've clean forgot all about the other—that at Panginan."



Within half an hour we were on board the *Charlemagne*

## The Raft

BY GEORGE HIBBARD

Author of "A Little Matter of Real Estate," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY GAYLE HOSKINS

(See Frontispiece)

EVERYWHERE the glittering sea stretches to meet the blazing sky without a speck of anything visible. For three days we have not caught sight of the smallest bit of a sail, the faintest sign which might indicate a trail of smoke at the horizon. Only a dark piece of wreckage has drifted our way over the slow, low waves. Nothing but the even, pale, burning heavens and the flat, simmering ocean. This is very remarkable, for we are in the direct line of ships—on the edge, at least, of a main marine high-

way. We thought that we should be rescued in a few hours, and now days and nights have passed.

I hardly can recollect anything of the accident. The bewilderment of the sudden awakening after the shock of the collision, the confusion, the shouts, the awful consciousness of the surrounding panic. The quick certainty of the hopelessness, the wild terror of the end. If I tried I could only recall it as a horrible whole and I do not try. It is too awful.

I am glad that I was alone. I am glad

that even my maid, Marie, who, to be sure, had only been with me a few months, decided to go back to her people in her country town in France. I have not the consciousness of the loss of anyone at all near to me. After the ship struck the half submerged derelict it went down in less than an hour. A great number got away in the boats. Many, many, though, of those with whom I walked the decks and sat at the tables, people whom I did not know certainly, are all gone. If there had been anyone among them dear to me I could not bear it. Now I am stunned and confused.

I can hardly realize my own plight, and yet the situation is terrible enough and sufficiently strange. When I saw Richard Ogden at the hotel at Naples and found that he was sailing in the same vessel, I was surprised. I had told him in Rome that afternoon on the *campagna*, that I would not marry him. Still I knew that he was following me. When I came on board and one of the first persons I met was Mr. Drummond, astonishment was even greater. I was very uncertain what to think. Was he also there because of me? I had no actual reason for believing it.

Now here we are, the three of us together, in mid-Atlantic on this raft, not as large as the rug in the library at "Broadlands." That we should be here is not so singular as might at first appear. At once when the accident happened both Dick and James Drummond hurried to take care of me. This life raft is a new, patented affair which the ship was carrying, and they got it and stocked it with everything. All were crowding for the boats, and in the darkness we were unnoticed. In the morning—the ship must have sunk a little after midnight—none of the others was anywhere.

I have found this little journal in my coat pocket—it is hardly more than a note-book—and I am writing in it for the distraction of the occupation. If the worst comes to the worst, which we do not at all expect, I shall send it to you as shipwrecked people send letters, for in my singularly lonely state in the world you are the nearest to me.

Then there are a number of friends whom I should like to have know what has become of me, and if this ever reaches you, why—you can tell them.

If it comes to that I shall cork this up in a bottle and set it adrift. Just now, though, I do not feel in the least as if there were any danger. I have no inclination to be more serious than if I were writing to you upon some rather unusual expedition or picnic. I may grow more fearful and more demonstratively dramatic later, but just now—

I was interrupted by the falling of the little canvas screen which they have rigged up to make a small shelter for me. It is only high enough to hide me when I am kneeling down and then I have to keep my head bent to be completely out of sight. It cuts off a corner of the raft large enough for me to be able to stretch myself out on some rugs where I sleep if I can.

#### *Fourth Day.*

To write is a little like telling it to some one and I have no one to whom I can speak.

Last night I woke up suddenly. So far we have had good weather, though tropically hot. I gazed straight up and, the stars looking just as they do on land, I forgot completely for a moment where I was. I quickly remembered when immediately I heard their voices on the other side of the screen. They were talking very low, but the raft is so small—all was so quiet—that I heard distinctly.

"We have got to take stock of the situation," said Drummond decidedly. "Is she asleep?"

"I think so," Dick replied.

"How can we be certain?"

I heard the stir of a body and immediately close to the canvas screen Dick spoke softly but distinctly:

"Madge."

I cannot say what made me. I did not answer. I suppose I was yet a little drowsy and not quite clear-headed. Of course I should have let him understand that I was awake, but I did not seem to realize it then and now I am glad—glad that I was silent. I did not reply even when he again repeated:



"Madge."

I held my breath indeed with a queer, tense suspense.

"She would have heard me and have said something if she wasn't asleep," Dick declared, crawling back.

"Then I can go ahead," Mr. Drummond continued. "You know the proposition we're up against as well as I."

"You mean the drink question—"

"When I packed up in such a hurry I took that whole case of mineral water. As you have seen, all the bottles except three got broken."

"Now there's only this pint left."

"That's all. Of course, we expected to be picked up long before this. It's lucky though that I insisted from the first that we should go without."

Instantly I recollected. I had drunk whenever I was thirsty without any thought. Now I remembered that I had not seen either of them drink at any time. They had let me have all that I wanted without objection, but had taken nothing themselves. How angry I was with myself at the realization of my own heedlessness. I bent forward cautiously, to listen better.

"My throat's like a piece of sandpaper," said Dick. "To-day I felt light headed."

"That's it. We've got to see where we are because when we can't keep on—" Mr. Drummond paused. "We must look out for her."

"Of course," said Dick restlessly.

"That would be easy enough," Mr. Drummond continued deliberately, "but for one consideration. We could, of course, both jump overboard with the heaviest thing we could find tied to us, only she can't be left alone on this raft."

"No."

"You see, one of us has got to stay with her."

"Yes."

"But which? If one of us must get out—"

"Need we discuss that—now?" Dick asked impatiently.

"You said how you felt, I'm not saying how I feel, but we'd better decide—for—" Again he stopped for a moment.

"There is a pint bottle left. That will give Miss Shereton and whoever may stay with her a fighting chance—for several days—of being picked up. Indeed within that time rescue is a practical certainty. The important matter is to hold out—for Miss Shereton to hold out long enough. By to-morrow night, if nothing happens, one of us must remove himself. I tell you," he added suddenly and fiercely, "I've seen a man go mad with thirst in the desert. It's not a pretty sight. Not one for Miss Shereton to see."

"To-morrow night," repeated Dick. Again I heard him move and speak abruptly. "I suppose you know it. I love her. I'd be willing and ready to die for her."

My heart gave a great leap. I took a sudden breath and then for a moment I did not breathe at all. How could I have ever failed to give Dick just due? Why had I thought so much of little mannerisms which meant nothing—his habit of always carrying an umbrella which foolishly provoked me, his deep interest in collecting post-cards at every place where we were. He spoke very simply, but there could be no mistake that he meant what he said—that it was no idle assertion, but that he was prepared to act in accord with his declaration. He was ready to die for me and would do it. What more could a girl ask?

Mr. Drummond was silent for a moment. Next he made a sound deep in his throat.

"Hum," he began. "I'm here and I have to consider myself. I confess I have a prejudice for living, but as a sporting proposition I don't know that I could let you go it alone—even if you offered to make the sacrifice—which I don't understand exactly that you have—"

"I'd die for her," repeated Dick obstinately and earnestly.

"Exactly," returned Mr. Drummond. "But I have an idea that I could not allow that, although you should insist. Under these circumstances—the case in a measure has come up with shipwrecked people before—they draw lots."

Dick did not speak.

"They toss up for it," continued Mr.

Drummond thoughtfully. "I don't happen to have a *centime* with me. Have you?"

"No," Dick answered sharply.

"Then we must find another way. Perhaps Miss Shereton has a piece of money. To have her decide would not be bad. The plan rather pleases me."

"She wouldn't," broke in Dick.

"Of course not—if she knew. Only if she did not. Suppose we ask her to give us a coin if she has one. The first she picks out. If the date on it is an even number, you win and I—go. Odd—I stay. Odd or even—that's quite as good as pitch and toss and will settle it as well."

"This is no joking matter," urged Dick petulantly.

"I said it first, half in joke, I'll own. The more I think of it, though, the more I like it. Let Miss Shereton act as fate. That is all."

"You really mean it?"

"I really mean," replied Mr. Drummond in a tone which there was no mistaking, "that within a few hours the question of life and death must be settled for all of us. We want to give her the best chance. Perhaps one or the other of us must get out of the way."

A long time I lay awake. Indeed I have not been asleep since. I wanted to think, though I saw there was no need of thinking. Of course I had made up my mind in an instant what to do or what not to do. Immediately I decided that I should promptly tell them as soon as the day came that I had overheard all that they had said. Still the situation made me reflect in spite of the terrible queeriness of it. Suppose that I had not known their wild plan—that I had ignorantly enacted the part of fate, that I had given the coin—which should I wish that it was, the odd or the even? The whole matter was there. Dick had said that he was ready to die for me and I knew that he meant it.

The moonlight was very bright. I could manage with great care to reach without their hearing me this note-book, which is really a pocket-book also. There are several leather divisions in it and I fancied that there might be some money

in one of them. I drew it toward me cautiously and felt. My fingers touched metal. I drew out two francs. In the strong illumination I glanced at them. The date on one was nineteen hundred and five—on the other nineteen hundred and eight. Odd and even.

When the sun was above the rim of the ocean and the light and heat were at once pouring down with almost the intensity of noon, I stood up and came out from behind my screen. They had something to eat spread out on the floor of the raft and the one bottle corked and carefully propped by packages and boxes.

"I know," I said, pointing at it. "I could not help listening to you. There is nothing left for us to drink."

"Oh, yes, this will last for you for some time," replied Drummond quickly.

"You heard what we said?" Dick broke in.

"Everything. Even that foolish plan—with which of course I will have nothing to do."

We were all silent for a moment.

"It may come to something like that," said Drummond gravely.

"It shall come to nothing of the kind," I declared. "At least it shall be nothing of that kind."

"Miss Shereton," said Drummond. "You are a sensible girl. Since you have learned as much as you have, perhaps it is fitting that you should be taken into our confidence. We want to do everything we can for you, and for ourselves too, if possible."

"Madge," exclaimed Dick, standing up. "You heard me say that I'd die for you. I'll do it."

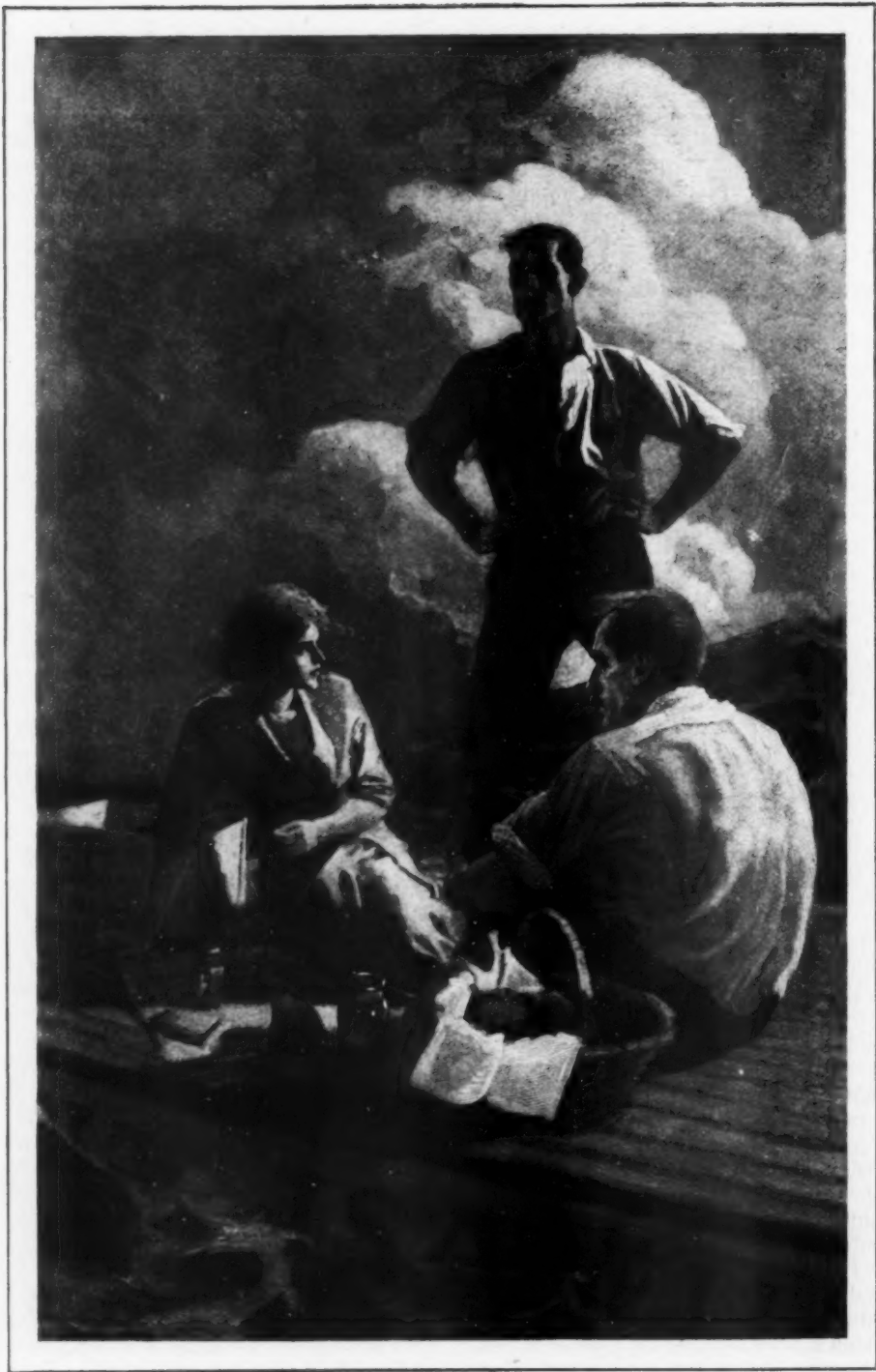
"I know," I replied looking at his pale, excited face, his trembling form and hands which twitched nervously.

"This," said Mr. Drummond, "is a particularly practical situation, if a rather unusual one. We had better meet it practically."

"That is what I should like," I assented.

"In a shipwreck you know it is 'Women first,' and this is a shipwreck."

"Oh," I cried desperately, "I can't accept even the thought of such a sacri-



"In a shipwreck, you know, it is 'Women first'."

fice. We must fight it out to the end on even terms. If there is to be any drawing lots I must come into it, too."

"Bully for you," ejaculated Mr. Drummond with an unusual warmth of commendation.

"No—no—" urged Dick quickly.

"We shall not consider that," Mr. Drummond went on steadily.

"Well," I assented, "I shall not drink any of the water."

There we are.

The day has worn on. A very faint haze is over the sky, but that seems to make it even hotter. In a way the red rays of the sun appear to be entangled and held in it and stupefy us with a fearful heat. The sea rises and falls slowly in great, flat undulations, but the surface of the water appears to be oily—in the torrid atmosphere, almost greasy. I can at moments almost believe that I see wriggling things crawling on it.

My watch ran down and I have not wound it. There was nothing by which to set the time exactly. Now, I do not know how the hours go except very generally by the course of the sun. That hardly seems to stir. It has apparently been almost directly overhead for an eternity, burning us up. I have not drunk anything and already I am parched and feverish and suffering. I can believe that I know the way the men feel who have had nothing for days and yet I am afraid that I do not. Even Mr. Drummond looks haggard.

Not long ago, Dick fell into a troubled sleep. He was all stretched out on the floor of the raft and moved and jerked as I have seen dogs when they were resting. I was certain from his breathing that he was sleeping. It was very hard and harsh, indeed there is no other name for it, and he snored slightly. In this condition, the grotesque little sound was horrible. Mr. Drummond was sitting with his knees up to his chin and his hands clasped about them. At last he unwound himself and drew himself over closer to me.

"I want to tell you something," he

began suddenly and he looked at Dick to satisfy himself that he was really unconscious.

I nodded, perplexed and a little frightened by his manner.

"I think that you might as well hear it. Anyhow you will understand better. I never expected to be telling you this way, but I want you to know before the end—whatever it is. I followed you on board the ship. I really went to Europe after I saw you at that dinner in New York in the spring because you went. The reason you met me in one place after the other was because I was following you."

He paused and I found nothing to say.

"I love you," he stated simply.

I do not know by what impulse I covered my face with my hands.

"We may, none of us," he continued, "get out of this, but I am going to try my best that we shall. I want you to live to be my wife and I want to live for that and I am going to live for that."

Instinctively and instantly I thought of Dick's saying that he would die for me.

"I'm going to try, anyhow," he persisted. "I'm going to do all I can for it"—he indicated Dick's sleeping form—"with him in the case. I'll give him every chance that is fitting—"

"We must all have a chance," I gasped.

"There is a certainty of our being saved," he answered gloomily, "within a time. That is the difficulty—to be able to wait for it—to keep you alive for it. If you would decide now which of us you wanted, that would be easy. Odd I was to stay, even I was to go," he muttered recklessly. "That would be so simple, but I'm going to do my best to live for you."

"I wish that I were dead now," I moaned, and I sobbed, though I was not crying and had no feeling of crying.

Just then Dick stirred and woke. He did not know where he was, but stared about with shifting vacant eyes and a lax, wavering smile. Then for a moment I did not see him at all. I had not



fainted. I was only momentarily dazed. The awful heat, the effect of the thirst which I was beginning to feel so intolerably, what I had just been hearing—

"Drink a little of this," said James Drummond and he held his hand out toward the bottle of water.

"No," I answered, though I could hardly command the resolution to say it in the agony of fiery longing.

Dick at that moment stood up unsteadily and took two steps across the raft—as far as he could go. Mr. Drummond remained motionless, but turned his head gazing away over the sea. Suddenly Dick wheeled about on us. He did not appear very differently, but I sprang up.

"A grand swimming day," he muttered. "Water ought to be just right. It's deep and cool down there behind that rock."

Unavoidably I looked at the unbroken sea, like so much tin reflecting the sun.

"He's a little off his head," said Mr. Drummond, nodding in answer to my look. He also was standing up and for an instant we were posed, a motionless group.

"I bet it will feel good," called Dick with a sudden chuckle—"and taste good too."

He had on only the lightest silk shirt and thin trousers. In his state of mind I believe that he was unconscious that he wore anything. Before we realized it, with a gleeful shout, he had taken a jump and was overboard.

"The fool," I remember that I heard Drummond mutter shortly.

I know that he did not hesitate. Instantly he plunged into the ocean. I sank on my knees and crawled to the edge of the raft, my hands clasped, my heart not beating as I watched the contest of the men in the water. That is what it was for a moment. Drummond had instantly seized Dick—who at first resisted him. Next he suddenly swooned. He lay inert, supported by Drummond, who quickly drew him to the raft. He himself climbed on it, holding Dick by an arm and then drew him up on the

floor. He stretched him out and together we looked down at him.

"In this case," said Drummond slowly, "we'll have to use a little of it."

I understood at once that he meant the water. I seized the bottle and gave it to him. He uncorked it very carefully.

"Your handkerchief," he said.

I gave him the little lacey scrap of linen I had, and he moistened it. With difficulty he opened Dick's mouth and squeezed the drops into it. Presently the effect was evident. Dick swallowed two or three times. He put his hand to his throat and opened his eyes. Still he did not recognize us and did not know where he was.

"He's better," commented Drummond, "but he's still batty." Then he added even lower, "I want to be the one to live for you, but not in that way."

"It was—was—magnificent of you," I answered.

#### *The day after yesterday.*

So I shall be sending this to you by the prosaic way of the post office instead of by means of a little bottle bobbing through the storms and drifting across the calms of the ocean. You know already by wireless that I am safe. I shall send this off at quarantine—I think the letters are taken there—and you will get it at "Broadlands" within a few hours after I have landed.

I think I'd rather write the rest than wait to tell you. I don't want to remember it—and I don't want to forget. These are quiet and untroubled hours now in which I rest and slowly get over the shock and strain of what I have been through and writing to you is helpful, as writing was when I was lost, not knowing what was going to happen. Anyhow, I shall write very briefly. All of it was so unlike anything and though it hardly seems real, it seems indeed more real now than it did at the time.

Dick remained unconscious and we sat silent hour after hour. I could see that Dick grew worse. There were moments when he was quite himself and knew us and appeared to realize everything. Then the fever came back again

and he went out of his head. We gave him drops of the water from time to time. At last, as I was about to touch his lips with it, James Drummond spoke.

"No," he said, "I can't let you. That must be for you."

"But he is ill; he may be dying," I remonstrated. "I will not take it."

My throat was almost cracking. Queer wheels and darts of light appeared wherever I looked. James Drummond was white and hollow-eyed and his mouth was open a little and drawn. We had both begun to suffer from the thirst increasingly and in a way that frightened me. There was Dick as he was and how long—

Then all at once I heard a muttering and Dick sprang up. He was quick as a cat and not unlike one in his movements. He jumped for the knife-like can-opener which Drummond had thought to bring. It made a dangerous weapon as in his madness he could and would use it. With this he took a step toward James Drummond threateningly. Terrified as I was, I caught the expression—so strong and intense—of real relief, of true joy in James Drummond's face.

"All right," he said almost with exultation. "If it's to be a fight, good enough. That's a straight proposition."

And just as I stood expecting to see the two men in an awful struggle—Dick was taller and heavier, but I am not certain that Drummond would not have got the better of him, though Dick had the knife—suddenly Dick's attitude changed. He dropped his arm. His countenance was irradiated with an immediate look of imbecile satisfaction. I could not understand. Neither could James Drummond. With our eyes we followed the direction of Dick's steady gaze. At first neither of us saw anything. Then I noticed what seemed a faint brown mist.

"It's smoke," James Drummond exclaimed.

We continued to stare in the direction of his gaze. It was smoke, a long, faint brown plume against the dazzling sky. That moment we forgot all that had gone before. And even as we watched we saw the lines of the ship and then we saw that they had descried us and were making for us. Finally a boat was lowered and came bobbing toward us over the trembling breast of the sea.

Within half an hour we were here on board the *Charlemagne* in safety and in the midst of civilization. No transition could have been more sudden—no contrast greater. I hear an orchestra playing in a distant cabin which is a drawing room. I believe that I feel all to be as impossible as I did on the raft. One thing more I must tell you before I fasten this up and give it to the steward to post.

Dick is below in the hospital and has not appeared, but will quickly be well. Just now when I took out the little notebook to tear out the leaves on which I had written the account of what happened, to send them in this letter, the two francs fell out in my lap. James Drummond was sitting on the deck chair next to me. He noticed them and looked at me, smiling. Quickly and impulsively I glanced at them and handed one to him.

"Odd," he said, looking at it closely. "You remember that meant I was to stay? Does it mean that now—and hope—"

"I think so," I answered unsteadily. And then quickly I added: "Yes—I am certain. I am certain."

Postscript: Romance to the contrary, it is not the man who wants to die for a girl. It is the man who means to live for her and fight for her and work for her—and win her.



The big liner slipped out of quarantine and pointed her nose up the Bay

## The Land of the Free

BY WILLIAM BULLOCK

Author of "The Tramp," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY CHARLES E. CHAMBERS

Now, by our fathers' ashes! where's the  
spirit  
Of the true-hearted and the unshackled  
gone?  
Sons of old freemen, do we but inherit  
Their names alone?

—Whittier.

AS the big liner slipped out of quarantine and pointed her nose up the Bay, Danny Farley, gazing over the steerage rail at the green sweep of Staten Island, felt he had just begun to live. The spirit had been growing on him since Fire Island gave him his first glimpse of the Land of Promise, and already the patriotism that held him was that of an American ready to sacrifice his life upon the altar of his country. For Danny Farley never had had a country, and now he

had found one. That is, he never had had a country he could call his very own, for the Saxon yoke forbade his claim to the Ireland of his birth and earned only his inherited hatred.

He saw, now, what he had been hearing of since he was a *gossoon*, knee-high. He had grown to young manhood longing for this very sight; and the sight was exceeding good to him; the fairest, most inspiring sight he had ever seen. It meant far, far more to Danny than the easy roll of the now retreating Staten Island hills, or the flat line of the approaching Jersey shore, or the long string of coasters, straining on their cable chains and swinging with the tide.

What a story it all told him! He was

passing through a gate that stood open to receive him. He was bidden to enter here to share Opportunity with all. Wherever his eyes moved or rested there was he to find Freedom and Equality. Danny Farley knew. He had passed out of bondage into a land where a man was a man—a land where the harried and the hungry were admitted to peace and plenty.

There were others at the steerage rail, but Danny heeded them not. These others were thinking Danny's thoughts, and they also were silent. For, as with Danny, they needed no instruction in what the signs meant.

Danny's cheeks had the redness and the softness of drifting mists and warm rains; of vapory sunshine and of gentle winds off the Western sea. Turf smoke still clung with mellow flavor to his homespuns; even as he half-hung across the rail he betrayed, by many angles, his hillside awkwardness. But that and much more were only to be expected, because Danny was a private in the rear-guard of the rugged host that had cleaved and paved the way, that had dreamed and achieved; aye, that had fought and bled, to bestow on him this glorious heritage!

The steel sides of the big liner cut faster through the lapping waves, and—there it was, at last! A draped figure reared on granite, as if to mock the assaults of Time; a hand raised above a star-encircled head, and a beacon in that hand to light the road! Danny Farley knew—oh, yes, he knew. He had seen that beacon shining three thousand miles away. He had read that beacon's signal as he walked on the hillside and in the vale. *Freedom* was the message the beacon flashed, and that was enough for Danny Farley.

The ship's band on the promenade deck began to play. It was a new tune to Danny. But a voice near him began to sing, and Danny listened and knew what the tune meant. Danny Farley took off his tweed cap and began to sing a new song. He sent his voice swelling out across the rippling Bay; he felt as if the upraised arm of the draped figure waved approval, for this is what Danny sang:

'Tis the star-spangled banner;  
Oh, long may it wave  
O'er the land of the free  
And the home of the brave!

## II

Danny Farley had done an amazing thing. He had spoken up against the thieving of the National Beet Company.

The veins in "Red" McMahon's thick neck swelled from rage. "What the hell's wrong with you?" roared the wharf boss. "Don't you know on what side your bread's buttered, yet?"

Danny did not quail. "If I'd wanted to be a thief or to see thievin' done I wouldn't have come to this country," was his retort. "There's dirty thievin' goin' on on this dock, and I'll not keep me mouth shut for a dollar-and-a-half a day."

An evil glitter showed between the close lids of McMahon's eyes. "How much will it take to make you keep your mouth shut, then?" he demanded.

"Not every dollar the Company owns," said Danny, in a voice that proved it, every word.

The wharf boss paused for deliberation. He worked stubby fingers in his mat of red hair. He rolled tobacco under his tongue; looked up and down the lean length of the youth in front of him, then stepped over, and, with a shot of his hand, banged shut the door of the shanty that served as his office. "I don't want the rest of the unloadin' gang to hear your fool talk," he explained, angrily.

"Troth, and you might as well leave the door open," said Danny, "for there's not a mother's son of them but knows what's goin' on."

"You're a liar, and this is your last day on this wharf, me young greenhorn!"

Danny took the outburst unmoved. "Are you thinkin' I care for that, McMahon? Faith, I don't—not the snap of me fingers. It was the men workin' beside me—if you want to know—showed me what's doin'. They all know there's thievin' right and left—The scales are *fixed*, and you know it, McMahon."



The wharf boss again burst out in rage. "I know nothin', and the gang knows nothin'. The government gets its due—every nickel. If there was any crooked work I wouldn't stand for it—not for a minute."

"Red" McMahon stopped short, waited, but Danny did not answer. Then the wharf boss stepped up to the youth and dropped a hand in friendly fashion on his shoulder. "Say, Danny, what's come over you?" he tempted. "This will never do. You'll never get ahead actin' up like this. I'm twenty-five years out from the Ould Dart, and *I know*. And is this the way to do—turnin' on me, the man who gave you your first job? I planted you on the dock the day you landed, and do you call this playin' fair—playin' fair and square—and between two Irishmen?"

Danny drew back, dropping the hand from his shoulder. "I'm right thankful for all you've done for me, McMahon," he said.

The wharf boss laughed loudly. "Then what's the matter with you, Danny, me lad? Forget it; forget it!"

Danny shook his head slowly and firmly. "I can't forget it."

"I know just how you're feelin', Danny," persisted McMahon. "You think you've a right to kick, but you're wrong—dead wrong, Danny."

"I'm not wrong, I tell you," gave back Danny confidently; and once more McMahon raged at him.

"Damn you, I'll break you, even if you are one of me own kind. Do you hear that? I'll break you—you, a dock wolloper, risin' up on your hind legs!"

"I don't care if you do, McMahon. I didn't come to America to help thieves, and you're thievin' here—The gang says you've been thievin' these years and years."

The wharf boss jerked wide the door. "Go back to your work," he ordered. Danny stepped out past him.

"I'll work this day, and no more," he said; then gave over his shoulder: "And I wont keep me mouth shut tomorrow or the next day."

McMahon was silent as he watched the youth go, but under his breath he

cursed Danny for a fool. The wharf boss was anything but pleased. He had expected more from the boy. He had taken a fancy to him from the start. He had even had it in mind to put Danny in charge of one of the scales. He was glad now he had taken his time about that, for Danny had turned out headstrong and full of foolishness. Still the lad, somehow, carried McMahon back to the time when he himself was a raw immigrant. The wharf boss had spoken the truth when he said he knew how Danny felt. McMahon had not been always thus. He and Danny *were* of the same stock, and there were other things between them. They had both gone through the parting; they had both made the same promise, sitting beside the turf fire on that last night. McMahon remembered that last night well. His father and mother had made him promise. Made him? Why, there was no making about it. And it had been just the same with Danny—it always was the same in the cabins on the hill-sides. McMahon could repeat, too, word for word, what the priest had said as he took Danny's hand:

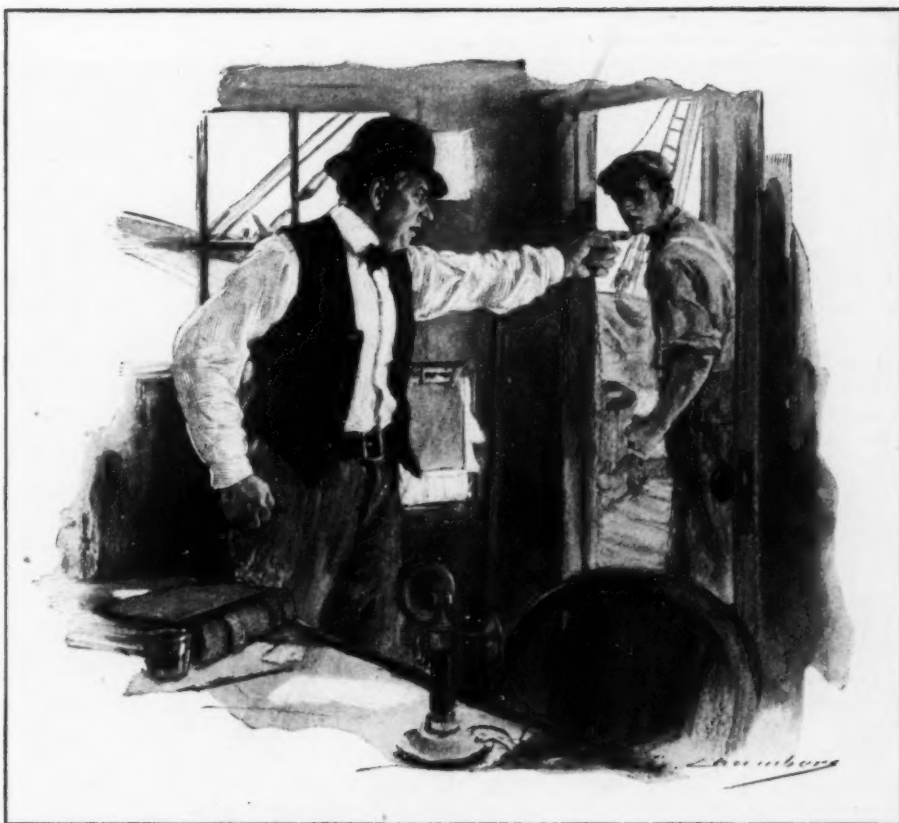
"Don't let the devil get hold of you, Danny. Don't forget the faith in which you grew up from the cradle, Danny."

Why, of course, that was what the priest had said, for McMahon had heard those words himself.

But what foolery! Let by-gones be by-gones. "Red" McMahon snapped the telephone receiver off its hook, shouted a number, and then listened attentively to the instructions of James Brunt, president of the National Beet Company. He gave "Fine! Dandy! Sounds good, Mr. Brunt!" into the telephone in rough and ready recognition of a superior intelligence; then going out on the wharf, he drew Danny, with a jerk of his hand, from the gang unloading the freighter up from Cuba.

"We'll go and see the man higher up," said McMahon; and Danny walked beside him without a word.

McMahon led up from the grime and bleakness of the docks into the heart of the financial district—the first visit Danny had paid there. It was only a matter



The wharf boss again burst out in rage

of a few blocks, but what a contrast it gave! Danny was left to wait in the outer office while James Brunt and his wharf boss talked over the novel situation, and from the window on the twenty-sixth floor he could see the flat roofs of the National Beet Company's warehouses, with the funnel of the discharging freighter showing beyond.

Danny entered the president's private office with his tweed cap in his hand. He tripped on the edge of the Tabriz rug, recovered himself with an effort, and stood sheepishly at the end of the flat mahogany desk. Vaguely Danny comprehended that the white-haired, refined-featured man calmly surveying him dictated the price of one of the first necessities of life to the people of the United States. Brunt gave the youth am-

ple time to form his first impression, and Danny plainly showed he felt James Brunt was the last man in the world he would pick out to be a thief.

McMahon was crushed down in a leather chair in a corner, his hat held in both hands between his knees. A sneering smile was on his florid face, and that had the effect of giving Danny confidence. Brunt was quick to observe the change, and motioned the youth to a chair at his right hand. Danny went down clumsily on the very edge, one leg bent under him and propping himself with one foot flat on the floor.

"Now, young man," began Brunt, slowly giving out the words, "will you be kind enough to tell me what complaint you have against the company?"

Danny squared his shoulders, and

looked straight at the man higher up. "They're thieving on the docks," he exclaimed eagerly, not quailing when Brunt challenged him with a penetrating stare. "You may not know they're thievin', sor, but they are, so help me God. They're goin' light on every truck. I told McMahon what I'd seen. They have wires under their heels, and they hit the beams. McMahon called me a liar for sayin' it, but I'll take you down this minute, sor, and show you, with your own two eyes. All the gang knows it, but they don't care; they only laugh and say everybody grafts."

James Brunt began to tap with the end of a pencil on his desk. "If such a thing were possible, Farley, how does it come to interest you?"

Danny's eyes opened wide in astonishment. "Interest me, sor? Is that what you ask me? Do you think for one second I could see thieves at work and say nothin' about it? If I was to see McMahon with his hand in your pocket would you have me say nothin' to you about it?"

"You'll never see me hand in anybody's pocket, Farley," interrupted McMahon gruffly from the corner.

Brunt raised a hand, and the wharf boss subsided. "That is right, Farley. If you saw any man's hand in my pocket, most certainly I should not expect you to remain silent."

Danny lifted himself from his chair in sudden excitement. He gripped a corner of the desk and looked down steadfastly at the self-contained man of business. He was flushed, elated. "I knew you'd say that, sor," he exulted; then was carried away by his own earnestness. "They're thievin' the same way down on the docks. They have their hands in the government's pocket and that isn't right. They live under the wing of the government, and they rob it like bloody murderers. They care for nobody, sor, but the government will win with honest men like me and yourself helpin' it, sor. I've been six months down there on the docks—ever since I landed. I heard tell of thievin' all that time, but I didn't believe it till I seen for meself this very day. I weighed a truck meself,

and when the weigher came back he weighed it short. I watched me chance, and when he lifted his heel I pulled out a wire."

"What did you do with that wire, Farley?" asked Brunt quietly.

"I handed it to McMahon where he was standin' on the dock, and he laughed and threw it into the river."

James Brunt smiled on Danny Farley. "I wish I had a few more men like you in the company," he said; then turned quickly to the wharf boss. "Is it true, McMahon?" he demanded, his face darkened by a scowl.

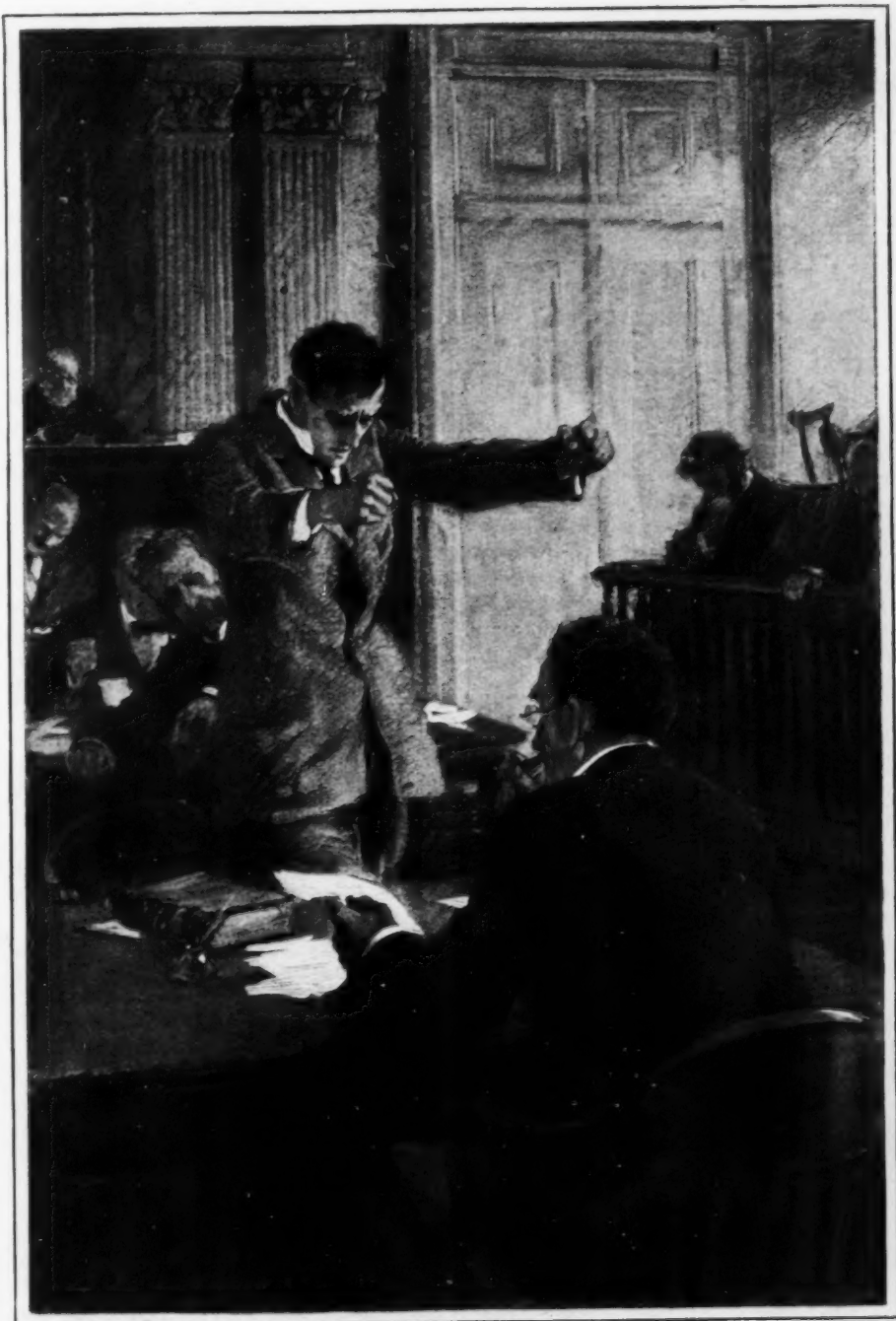
McMahon tossed his head indifferently. "The boy's just dreamin'," he said, as if dismissing the subject. Brunt stopped Farley on the point of a vehement denial.

"I will dispose of this," he said with calm authority. Again he began to tap with his pencil on the desk. "I suppose it has never struck you, Farley," he questioned slowly, "that each of our scales is under government inspection, and that there also is close government inspection of our weighers?"

Danny moved back uneasily in his chair. "Not a bit of me knew that, sor," he confessed nervously.

Brunt turned his eyes full on the youth, and smiled at his evident discomfiture. "I should hardly expect you to know that," he commented. "It shows, however, how careful one must be before making serious charges." Suddenly Brunt leaned forward, all keenness. "I'll let that go, though, Farley," he said, his words taking on a snap. "I have a surprise for you. I always am on the watch for young men of your sincerity and push. I'm going to promote you. I want you to take charge of those scales on our import docks. I take them out of McMahon's hands, and trust you to see to it that they are properly and honestly operated at all times. Is that arrangement satisfactory?"

Danny's nervousness did not go. Instead it grew worse than before. He had not expected anything like that; he was totally unprepared for the offer. He had been taken off his guard; he found it difficult to answer. No longer had he a



"Sentence me now!" he called



cause to champion; Brunt had cut the ground from under him. After all his fuss and protest, here was plain evidence that the National Beet Company aimed to do right, to deal fairly and honestly.

Brunt did not press for a hasty decision. He thought it wise to give Danny full time to think it over; also he felt satisfied he had outwitted this fanatical youth. "I'm waiting," he said quietly, at length. "What's your answer, Farley?"

"Not in all me life had I thought such as that, sor," replied Danny.

"You don't want promotion then, is that it?" snapped Brunt again.

There was a challenge in the tone that restored Danny's confidence. "Yes, sor, I do want it," he replied promptly, and drew himself up. "I'll give you honest weighing, sor."

"Good! That's the way to speak out, and I feel you wont disappoint me," said Brunt. "Now, there's just one other detail: You have made a grave charge, Farley; one, which if true, McMahon here must answer for. Go to the dock, examine every scale for evidence of false weighing, and whatever you find report to me in this office at 9 o'clock to-morrow morning."

McMahon rose clumsily and moved toward the door. "He's welcome to all he finds, Mr. Brunt," he said; and, as Danny passed him, closed one eye knowingly at the president of the National Beet Company. Brunt took the familiarity with grave face, but coughed lightly behind his hand.

Danny was depressed, even sad, when he made his second call on the man higher up. Brunt listened to the lame report without an interjectory word. Danny had gone minutely over every scale, and every one of the twelve gave just weight to a fraction of an ounce.

James Brunt folded his arms, and leaned back in his chair. He was in the mood to read this young man a lesson. The integrity of the National Beet Company had been recklessly assailed; if a few words of frank counsel had the desired effect, it would not happen again.

"McMahon has told me you are new in this country, Farley," began James Brunt in pleasant condescension. "That

excuses you a lot. There may or may not have been tampering with those scales; I have given you ample chance to prove it, and you come to me without a scrap of proof. That's a poor recommendation in your favor, yet I refuse to take it as final. I pride myself on my judgment of men, and I am ready to wager there is better stuff in you than that. But don't leap at conclusions again; don't, for instance, run abroad and say a wire bears on the beam until you know and see it bears on the beam. In a court of law your testimony of supposition would not last a minute, apart from the fact it goes without corroboration. Hereafter look before you leap, Farley; and keep your eye on those scales. The best of us must make mistakes sometimes, and I have faith you are of the kind to profit by your present sad experience." The president of the National Beet Company smiled good-naturedly. "We are very exacting in business here in America, so don't make a second mistake. That's all."

Danny Farley watched those scales like a hawk. With his own hands he nailed down new boards for the feet of the weighers. And the weighers themselves seemed so anxious to work in with him, taking his orders so gracefully and acting upon them so promptly, that Danny made free expression of his gratitude. Danny was ever keen and alert, but there were some things he did not observe; and one of them was that the weighers were wont to exchange winks with "Red" McMahon, and occasionally whistled a particular tune.

It was on the first anniversary of the day on which Danny set fresh foot on the American soil that the blow fell. There was a quick raid on the import docks of the National Beet Company, and each of the twelve scales was found to be fixed. A wire under the heel was not the only resort of an unscrupulous company, and a little of the truth began to dawn upon the simple Danny.

He had been going along in blissful ignorance. He had been reasoning only on externals. He had not been sophisticated enough to uncover hidden trickery; he had been the sport of both Brunt and McMahon. And with a purpose. They

had kept his mouth shut; they had kept him from carrying his tales further; they had paid him back by putting him in a position of danger. What chance was there for such a witless youth? Poor Danny! What chance—what chance for the immigrant from the hillside, in his homespuns and his gawkiness and his know-nothing-ness, to match himself against an American corporation, which in a business sense was nothing short of an American institution, and which fleeced the American government just as shamelessly as it fleeced the American public.

Poor Danny! He heard "Red" McMahon's scoffing laugh as he was led off. McMahon was safe—Danny had made him safe. McMahon had had nothing to do with the scales; let them arrest the man who was directly in charge. Yes, and after Danny had been led off McMahon telephoned to James Brunt; yes, and the following day James Brunt sailed for Europe on his physician's order!

Danny Farley sat up straight during the three weeks of the trial. What had he to fear? He went on the witness stand and told his story. "Red" McMahon followed him, and riddled his story through and through. The Court wanted to hear James Brunt. Danny's lawyers, generously retained by the National Beet Company, elaborately explained that the great man of affairs was without knowledge of the trial and out of reach on his yacht in the Mediterranean.

The nation was in one of its periodical spasms of insulted righteousness. Public opinion was at fever heat. Shrieking editorials in the daily press called for prison stripes for robbers of the public purse. Corporation iniquity, it was proclaimed, must perish from the land; corporation rascality must be seared and flayed; by all the tenets of national upbuilding eternal Right must prevail.

North and South and East and West the storms broke and surged. And what came out of it all, was the sight of Danny Farley holding up his head, a prisoner at the bar!

What had he to fear, indeed? Bah! Didn't Danny know he was honest, and

wasn't this America? What had he crossed the sea for? What had the Statue of Liberty told him only a year ago as he came up the Bay? Of course, Danny Farley could have no fear. He would get justice.

That was it. Justice! Justice! That was what Danny Farley had come to America for. Of course; of course! "Red" McMahon might perjure his soul, but it would not avail. Other witnesses, too, might lie and pile up damaging testimony, but it would be Justice in the end. Certainly it would be Justice, for wasn't it Justice that had taken Danny Farley, an alien, and given him a country?

Danny could not help smiling. What foolishness it was for the lawyers to stamp and wave and rave like that! It only amused Danny Farley. He knew what the verdict would be. He knew what those twelve good Americans in the jury box would decree.

The jury went out and returned in five minutes. It needed no order to bring Danny to his feet. He stood there—black of hair, clean of feature, clean of limb, as the hillside youths usually are—and his gaze found the foreman boldly, fearlessly.

Was the prisoner guilty or not guilty? Danny almost laughed.

"*Guilty*," said the foreman; and Danny stood as if done in marble. What was that he heard? Danny Farley what he was, and it had come to this? He took a step forward.

"Say that again," shouted Danny; and heard not the rap of the judge's gavel on the bench.

"Keep quiet," was the order sent into Danny's ear, and rough hands pressed him into his chair. He put his arms on his knees and bent his head. The lawyer for the defense droned the usual motion to set aside the verdict. The judge denied the motion and announced the date for the passing of sentence. Danny came swiftly to his feet.

"Sentence me now," he called.

The judge eyed him sternly. "I will accommodate you," he replied sharply, then dropped into his court-room monotone. "Have you any statement you wish

to make before the sentence of this court is imposed?"

"Can I say a word?" asked Danny, doubting the privilege.

"That is what the law allows," said the judge.

The court-room was hushed. Danny tried and failed. He began, faltered, stopped; again began, again faltered, again stopped without expression. It all rushed in on him like a flood and overwhelmed him. And at the end all he could do was to reach out his arms, with his hands clenched, and cry straight from his heart:

"What have I got by comin' to America?"

The call brought a rustle of excitement before there settled a feeling of silent suspense. For a few moments Dan-

ny waited motionless; then into the stillness there came through an open window the grating sound of a street organ.

Danny dropped his arms and listened. Again he stood at the rail of the big liner, an immigrant boy dreaming his dreams. And again his dreams possessed him completely; for as the music rolled in, Danny Farley, with none daring to stop him, lifted his voice and sang:

'Tis the star-spangled banner;  
Oh, long may it wave  
O'er the land of the free  
And the home of the brave!

What else? Oh, well; you and I very well know. Danny Farley is at home in the Federal Prison, Atlanta, Georgia; and James Brunt, his health restored, is back from Europe.

## Gullah-Gullah, The Occult

BY THORNTON CHAMBERS

Author of "The Booming of Bonanza Park," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY JAY HAMBIDGE

THE beach and the boardwalk at Atlantic City were crowded with pleasure seekers who were making up for lost time toward the close of the season. With a keen eye everywhere, seeing a possible "plain clothes" detective in every stranger, Henry Hicks Hudson walked slowly with the surging crowds with Mrs. Hudson on one arm and Miss Eva Layne, of California, on the other.

A large group of men and women gathered around a big tent made of some gaudy, multi-colored material, with a bevy of pseudo-oriental dancing girls and turbaned attendants swarming around the main entrance. A flaring sign above the great portal proclaimed the presence within of "Gullah-Gullah—the famous deaf and dumb oracle of the Bageearhee—the most beautiful man in the world."

Presently the barker began his exhortations:

"Oho, ahee, ohoo! Ladies and gentlemen! This is positively the last and only appearance of the real, actual, bona fide, genuine Gullah-Gullah in his temple of mysteries, direct from the banks of the Bageearhee river, a tributary of the great river Ganges. The oracle, the most bee-auti-fool man of the Far East is speechless—yet gifted with the power of soothsaying through his sacred prophet and chief mahatma, Bazoos-Bazees. Step in one and all, and see what the future holds in store for you. He tells you the past, present and future. Step this way, ladies and gents. This way! The Great Gullah-Gullah is just now getting an extra, special strong inspiration. Readings one dollar each, with nothing extra to pay for locks of the hair of Buddha. This fee will also include views of the great Taj-Mahal, the Ghats of the Ganges and the snake charmers and other reptiles of the jungle. You will also see



One by one the awe-stricken women placed their hands in those of the oracle

the boudoir of Cleopatra and the palace of the Grand Llama of Lhasa."

"Let's go in here," said Mrs. Hudson. "Say, Henry, we never had our fortunes told since when we were engaged. Let us try."

"I don't believe in such things," smiled Hudson, "but you and Miss Layne go in and have a crack at it while I take a smoke on this bench. I'll stay here till you get through."

The women fell into the line of seekers of the truth. They passed by a number of grotesque *papier-maché* statues and "Hindoos," beating kettle-drums, into a semi-circular enclosure. With the pale blue smoke from a number of incense burners curling gracefully up in front of him, sat the great Gullah-Gullah on a dais elevated above the saw-dust covered floor.

One by one the awe-stricken women placed their trembling hands in those of the oracle. He held the women's hands in his for a few seconds and closed his eyes. Then he inclined his head and released his hold gently while nodding and shaking his head alternately. After each

"reading," he scribbled mystic signs on a slate and passed it behind a curtain.

"Step theese-da-way for the translate of the writing," said Bazoos-Bazees, a small, stout sheik with a feminine voice. The seekers of truth passed through another curtain and were handed typewritten "translations." The long line crept forward. It was now Mrs. Hudson's turn to consult the oracle.

The big blue eyes of Gullah-Gullah opened wide when he beheld Mrs. Hudson and Bazoos-Bazees made a sudden exit. Then a peculiar expression came over the nut-brown visage of the oracle. He held Mrs. Hudson's hand and, reluctantly however, let her pass. In this case the oracle wrote much more and carefully on the slate. Then he passed the writing behind the curtain to the translator. Finding it impossible to read her "fortune" in the dim light, Mrs. Hudson put the typewritten slip of paper in her pocketbook. Her companion read hers as soon as they reached the daylight. It was a stereotyped letter, stating the most absurd things and full of commonplace predictions.



They were both laughing when they reached the bench on which Hudson was waiting.

"You read my 'fortune' for me, Henry," said Mrs. Hudson. "That was two dollars thrown away, all right. Such a humbug! And I think he tried to flirt with me. He shook my hand in a peculiar way."

"The brute," snapped Hudson. "Just listen to this:

"'Lo and behold,' " began Hudson, reading the paper. "'I am the Great Gullah-Gullah. There is no greater Gullah anywhere. I am the truth and the oracle of verity. I do not sell lots in the redwood ravines; I do not sell mud to unsuspecting mortals; I do not teach the soft-brained to become sleuths, I do not become a fugitive because of the revenge of an ungrateful office boy. But I predict success for thee and thy husband, Henry Hicks Hudson. At the hour of midnight, in thine and thine husband's private abode, the Great Gullah-Gullah will stand before thee and thine husband. *Selah. Begone!*' "

Hudson turned pale and rose to his feet. Mrs. Hudson nearly lost her balance. They all stared at each other.

"Well, I'll be switched," hissed Hudson between his teeth. "This is the richest thing yet. Just think of it, Miss Layne. Here is a Hindoo, fresh from India, who tells my wife all about every graft we have been mixed up with of late, even about our last office boy, who put us all on the blink. This is a serious matter, Caroline Hudson. We had better pack up and—"

Hudson stopped short and stared into the blue sky. Then he let loose a peal of laughter and embraced his wife despite the fact that a number of passers-by had already stopped to observe the excited actions of the trio.

"What's the matter, Henry; have you lost your reason?" exclaimed Mrs. Hudson, restoring the equilibrium of her picture hat.

"Did you get a good look at him?"

"Who?"

"That guller-guller in there."

"Yes, a big stout man with a brown complexion and big blue eyes."

"Sure; I knew it. Of course! Well of all the nerve of that fellow! Blue eyes? Can you beat that? Why, that Hindoo faker is Will U. C. Jones, my old partner, and he of the great ideas. Nobody else in the world could have written that. You remember Mr. Jones, don't you, Miss Layne? He was my partner when you did my stenographic work on the Bonanza proposition in Los Angeles!"

Miss Layne was going to reply when a boy wearing an alleged oriental costume with a shirt and shoes which savored strongly of the Occident, came across the sand and handed Hudson this note:

Dear Old Hudson—I am crazy to see you again, so is Bazoos-Bazees, my wife. I cease to be Gullah-Gullah every evening at eleven-thirty. Please tell the bearer of this note where I can find you. A great idea is working in my system and it has anything else in the world beaten a thousand ways. Have all kinds of things to tell you. I have been peeping at you through a hole in the tent and see that you are growing whiskers again. The fly-cops wont know you now and the brown dye I have on is almost permanent—walnut oil and permanganate. If you don't mind my complexion, I would like to call to-night. Thank Mrs. Hudson for not fainting when she saw me. Make appointment.

Will U. C. Jones.

"Tell him we are at the Dennis," said Hudson, giving the "Hindoo" a coin.

"Begorrah and thot Oi will," replied the Oriental and salaamed.

They hurried back to their hotel and while Mrs. Hudson made preparations for refreshments, Miss Layne went out to get flowers for the reunion. Hudson bought a box of cigars with Jones' favorite brands on and placed it conspicuously on the smoking table. They astonished the management by ordering a midnight dinner for five and an assortment of wine.

Promptly at midnight the Great Gullah-Gullah and his "prophet" arrived. It took several minutes for the Hudsons to accustom themselves to the new complexions of the visitors. Jones helped himself to a handful of cigars and then shook hands all around. Mrs. Jones, whose color was of the evanescent kind,



Her companion read hers as soon as they reached the daylight

sobbed between mouthfuls at the repast and seemed extremely happy.

Hudson could not refrain from smiling when Jones, still wearing the Oriental robes, kicked his feet up on the mantel piece in a very civilized manner and began:

"I don't know why I drifted into the show business, but I guess it was chiefly because the Gullah-Gullah business gave us a chance to mingle with the very boobs that we had trimmed, without a chance of being recognized. Would you believe me—I have held the hands of the slickest detectives of Houston Street and have read the fortunes of a number of those whom we did up brown?"

"Never a word or a sign from them! Mrs. Jones is beginning to get a strong sense of humor. She really enjoys playing with the dynamite. She will prove

a great help and a first class grafter herself in our next big enterprise."

"What is that?"

"A great academy of occultism, with a strong cult of rich boobs who give up coin for the good of the cause and will us everything when they kick the bucket. I have it all framed up and have even designed a long silk gown for you to wear with a phosphorescent halo that shines in the dark. Are you game?"

"Did you ever see the time I was not?" demanded Hudson. "I only stipulate that we take in no outsiders who can turn around and blackmail us. Gents who make their living by assisting the credulous to reduce the per capita wealth, should form close corporations and be wary of strangers. Miss Layne is here now and can do anything from incorporating a company to going into a

trance. I guess we are there with the cast of characters, all right, all right. You write the libretto of this little game and we will prove the real actors. See?"

"We go in for mind reading, promotion of a diamond mine, spiritualism, conducting an academy, preaching in public and giving private seances. I will conduct the clairvoyant parlors in the day time. You conduct the academy and the mine. The ladies do the back work and we all work together at night in the Great Cult of Gullah-Gullah. Does that get you?"

"Fine, but what's 'back work?' That's a new one on me."

"You will learn all that when we get things in order," said Jones, with a fatherly mien. "I have not been mixing up with a lot of spirit grafters for nothing of late. I own the Gullah show and can sell it right now to a bartender who is tired slinging the suds and wants to become a real *mahatma*. He will buy me out if I put him on to the real dope. He thinks there is something occult to this. I have told him that such gifts do not develop at once but come gradually. He is willing to start in running the show as a twenty-five cent Gullah and will increase the price of the reading as the power increases in him."

"You mean as he gets more nerve," laughed Hudson. "But you don't tell him that. He'll be hep to it soon enough."

"I will sell out at once," said Jones. "However, I will have to stay a Gullah until this color wears off. I had to use it as in the hot weather the grease paint would run and interfered with the occult work."

Elaborate plans were made and Hudson was pleased to hear that Jones also was well provided with money. They decided to go into the game on a very large scale and felt certain that they would before long gather into their net some wealthy person who would compensate them amply for all the outlay.

It took nearly three weeks for the "Gullah" to turn approximately white and for the Academy of Occultism to assume its complete state. A handsome

residence on Broad street, Philadelphia, was chosen and they decided to make that city their stamping grounds. Portieres and expensive tapestries adorned the vestibule and the large parlor had been converted into a reception room. The next room was set aside for the clairvoyant work of Professor Clifford-Jones, as Jones preferred to be called. The offices and class rooms of the academy were located on the next floor and so was the private office of "Professor Henry H. Hicks."

"Now, everybody," said Jones one afternoon when they were all together and ready for the public patronage, "remember that we must let this spirit business become our second nature. Let us use the spirit talk and the spirit actions and be meek and mild all around. Wear rubber heels, dress in black, always talk in a whisper and keep the house in semi-darkness. I read somewhere that real diamonds have been discovered in California. It must have been in a prospectus of some mining company that I read it, as nothing was said about the fact that the largest diamond found there was about as big as a mosquito's ear. They are too small to mine. Now, I have a number of large, uncut diamonds which came from the Kimberly Mines. They are good stones."

"Every minute of the day remember that we have been shown a diamond mine by Little-Big-Snake, our great Indian spirit control. The old geezer is as dead as a door nail, but his spirit is roaming up and down Broad street every night. Every time you see a man, woman or child you must hint at that diamond mine. Just hint. Nothing more. After considerable hinting they will be ripe for transfer upstairs to Hudson. He will see that the maturing process goes on until he can sell them stock in the mine. But remember, you are putting them next to this thing as a favor, a kindness which your spiritual heart is actuating."

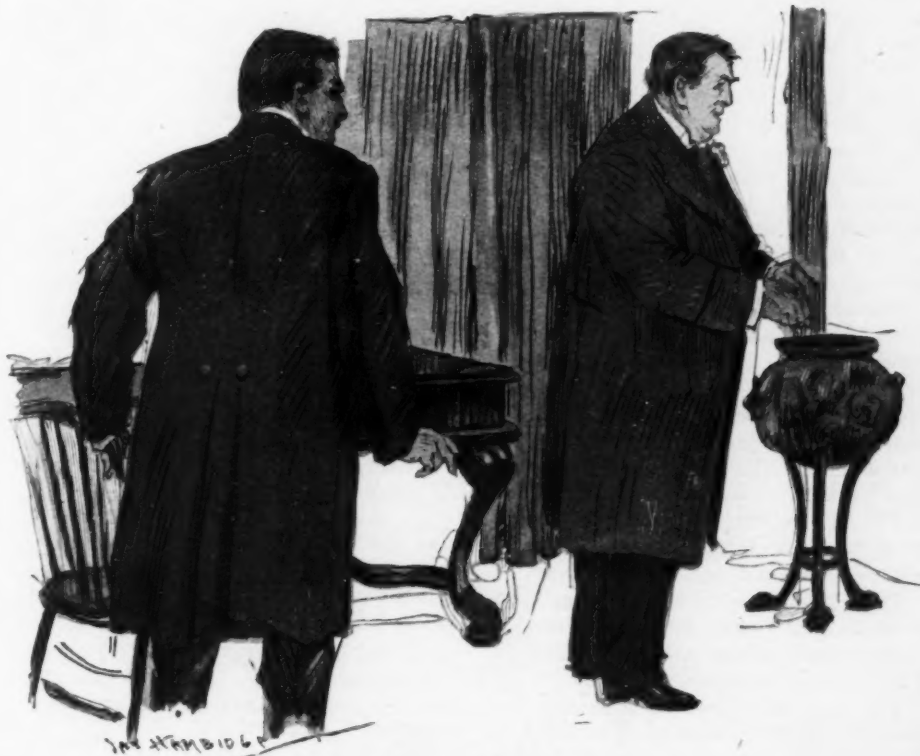
"We follow you close," said Hudson. "You read their future and see all kinds of mazuma in store for them if they will only listen to you. You send them upstairs the first time you catch them with

a check-book in their possession. Oh, beautiful! But this is a mere side-line, I take it."

"No, it is not," said Jones. "You will find it to turn out the only means whereby we can get the big money. Three or four clean sweeps will put us so safe financially that we will never have to trim a boob again as long as we live. I expect that we can run this for quite a time and live long afterwards

Jones' idea was approved and after a number of pamphlets had been circulated through the best neighborhoods of the city, the business began to grow. They were assembled in the middle parlor one day and Jones sent in a note, reading:

Here is a typical bread-winner for us. Mrs. Jones will do the back-work and you will listen closely. He won't know what struck him. J.



Jones was shaking hands with some invisible person

and die happy after erecting a monument to the man who invented the incorporation laws. He certainly did a service to a lot of men who otherwise would be working in a medicine show instead of promoting legitimate enterprises.

"Now, I propose to have you sit in the middle parlor and watch me handle an ideal client and I have taken special care that you should not know anything about my graft in order to make it more interesting."

The middle room was in darkness and they could see the front parlor very plainly through hazy curtains. A large, well dressed man entered. Jones took his hat and umbrella and placed them on a stand in the corner of the room.

"How do you do," said the man. "Are you the fortune teller?"

"No, my dear sir," said Jones. "I am not. But I suppose you call all classes of occultists by that name. It's unfair to us. I am merely a palmist."



"Well, it does not matter," said the man. "I am worried about a little matter."

"A little something not running smooth over in Trenton?" asked Jones, almost affectionately. "Yes; I know."

The man stared at him and turned pale.

"How did you know I came from Trenton?" he gasped. "My God!"

"Oh, did I mention your home town?" said Jones, carelessly. "We occultists have these things come to us from your spirit controls—Hallo John!"

"Who is John?" asked the man, looking at Jones, who was shaking hands with some invisible person in one corner of the room.

"John is your spirit control, an Apache," said Jones. "He came here with you. Rather decent chap, too."

The man collapsed and wiped perspiration from his face.

"Let me take your overcoat," said Jones. He took the man's overcoat and hung it on the wall.

"Now," said Jones, "Just write down four or five questions and your full name and birthday on this tablet. Then tear it off and put the written matter in your pocket."

"What's the use," said the man. "I can think of these things as well. I don't need to write them down."

"Just as you like," said Jones, "but if you write them down you cannot change your original thought. That is why I always want them written."

The man wrote several lines on the first sheet of a small tablet. Then he tore the paper off and put it carefully in his pocket. He scrutinized the next sheet and finding a slight impression on it he tore that and the next one off and put them also in his pocket.

"Now, Mr. Walters," began Jones. "We will get down to business. That patent of yours is not going to prove an infringement—not at all. The dairy crowd will put up that money. You will get four thousand dollars down and the balance will be paid you in two years. Now, Ferdinand, in regard to the little baby at home—it will be well and is better right now. Wait."

The man was bewildered. He stared at Jones and wriggled in his chair. "In a horseshoe of flowers," began Jones with a melodious voice, "I can see a little two story and attic house. Opposite it are large buildings over which swarm the guides of knowledge and learning. Aha, a university! It is a nice group at the house; your three brothers and two girls, both stenographers, and with them is another relative, a man. They sit by the little crib of a pretty child, a bee-aooti-ful child, who takes after his parents. The child is surrounded by clouds of the guides of darkness and ailment, but lo! The spirit guides can give them cards and spades—er—I mean, they chase the evil ones away—"

"Yes, yes, go on, professor."

"The vision fades," said Jones. "It's gone. But no! I see another for the future. It is a huge plant with smoke belching from the chimneys, and the machinery whizzing and a mansion is there. A man—it's you, no one else but you, Ferdinand Quincy Walters—is leaving the executive offices and driving in your sixty—no, let's see, yes, it's a sixty—horsepower car for your magnificent residence. —Five dollars please; special extra reading ten dollars."

The man arose with shaky legs, gladly paid five dollars and went out a happy man.

Jones sank into a chair and laughed and the others came in.

"Holy smoke! That was nice looking work," said Hudson. "But what do you do when you don't know them and have no advance information?"

Jones became indignant.

"What do you mean?" he demanded.

"I will take a solemn oath that I have never seen or heard of that man before he came here."

"You don't mean it," exclaimed Hudson. "Holy heavens, you don't mean to say there is anything supernatural in mind-reading, do you?"

"Not a whit," said Jones. "I took his hat and hung it up. It was an old hat and bore a Trenton label. It was safe to assume he came from there or had his trouble there. Was it not? Then Mrs. Jones went through the pockets of his



Hudson turned and reached for the money. It was gone

overcoat, which you noticed was hanging behind him. Here is the result of her back work."

Jones produced a small slip of paper and read:

"Coat pocket: Patent papers, Ferdinand Q. Walters, dairy appliance. Contract unsigned, to sell patent to firm for 4,000 down and balance in two years. Trenton directory gives: Ferdinand Q. Walters, inventor; 4444 Princeton avenue. (Near University). Same address: Minnie and Annie Walters, stenographers. Also Arthur Campbell, boards, 4444 Princeton Avenue. Three other Walters, brothers.'"

"So that's what you call back work?" asked Hudson, immensely interested. "But how did you get his middle name?"

"Merely a chance," replied Jones. "Q. is a very odd letter. It usually begins Quinlan, Quincy or Quigley."

"Ah, but how did you get the news about the baby?" asked Mrs. Hudson.

"He came in and wrote three questions," replied Jones. "Here they are."

He stepped back of his desk and produced a tablet. In a peculiar, dark writing the following questions stood out sharply:

*Will I succeed with my invention?*

*Will baby get better soon?*

*Will I ever be rich?*

"You see how that is done," continued Jones. "The tablet he writes on has a sheet in it smeared with invisible par-

affin; the prepared sheet is face down. No matter what he writes, it will make an invisible impression on the sheet facing the prepared one. He believes that he removes all trace of what he has written by putting the original sheet and one or two of the sheets next to it, in his pocket. He does not do so. I pass the tablet in to Mrs. Jones through the slit in the wall, which I had cut a couple of weeks ago—without your knowledge. After shaking lamp-black on the sheet, the writing develops and she slips me back the whole information. She has the directories of all the principal cities in the United States right at her elbow. The prepared tablet is the very backbone of mind reading and mystifies people to such an extent that even the wisest will fall for it. I never used this kind of work in the tent as Gullah-Gullah, but gave special seances privately after using the Gullah-Gullah game as an introduction. You will soon see this place crowded with the class of people whom you would give credit for better sense. When we get a crowd of them entirely bamboozled we will take them up into classes and develop them at from one to ten hundred dollars each. There is where we will make some big money."

Carriages, prosperous looking touring cars and electric vehicles soon became a familiar sight in front of the Occult Academy. While Jones was making a

profound impression on the gullible on the first floor, Hudson was giving development classes in metaphysics on the floor above. Matrons whose names were prominent in the social register of the City of Brotherly Love became regular visitors and the "professors" became convinced that it was soon time to launch the new cult and lay the foundation for some kind of religion.

One day as Jones was trying to take a few minutes for lunch and had succeeded in eluding the long line of clients who were waiting in the hall by making his exit through the basement door, he found himself face to face with the Trenton inventor, who was just stepping out of a big automobile as he reached the street.

"Oh, professor," said the man. "I must see you."

"Well, well, Mr. Walters, I am glad to see you. I am rushed to death. Can you come along and talk while I have lunch? Have you had yours?"

"Yes, thank you. Step into the machine. It is a sixty horse power, just as you told me. You are a wonderful man, Mr. Clifford-Jones."

They drove to the rathskeller and as soon as they were seated, Walters began:

"It was truly remarkable, professor, how you predicted everything that has happened to me since I saw you. The baby got well and I sold the

patent. The spirits were a little bit off when they told you I was to get four thousand. I sold it outright for cash and got twenty thousand—"

"Do have some lunch," said Jones. "Please do—"

"And everything went ever so smooth," continued Walters. "But I came to see you about that fellow John."

"John Who?"

"My spirit guide, the Mohawk."

"Oh, yes, yes, but he is an Apache," said Jones suddenly staring into the air behind his visitor. "I don't see him around just now. Maybe he does not like rathskellers. Conditions are not favorable, perhaps."

"How's that?" asked Walters in blue-eyed wonder.

"Well, you see, Mr. Walters, the spirits sometimes get badly balled up and become wayward just as us people. If they stray away from you you will have bad luck and things are sure to go wrong. The only thing to do then is to get your ethereal self highly developed and go after them and make them stay and tend to business. Then you can hear and see what ordinary people don't even dream of. Just like myself. I should consult Professor Hicks if I were you. But don't tell him I said so. He is crowded almost to death and that kind of work saps a man's vitality. I



He counted the money



He knocked the screen down with one kick

have seen him unconscious for three days after a hard fight with a Sioux once."

"Frontier trouble?"

"Yes, my dear Mr. Walters. He had a battle on the frontier of the terrestrial and the borders of the celestial world. He will not thank me for piling work up on him. He is expensive, but what do you care?"

"Not a bean," said Walters.

"I thought not."

"I have great faith in you, professor," said Walters and tried to conceal a tear of gratitude which stole down his cheek. "I need strong mental powers now. My wife has fallen heir to two hundred thousand dollars, all her own, and she can't make up her mind what to do with it."

"Hm, are you quite sure you have had lunch?" asked Jones, eagerly. "Do take something. Have a cigar."

"Well, say," continued Walters. "My wife thinks we owe everything to you and John. She wants to see you, too. When can we come?"

"Oh, for social calls I can always spare the time," declared Jones. "I will see you to-morrow afternoon. In the meantime I will go after John good and strong and see what's taking up his time. It beats

the deuce how those Indians will go on the war path."

"Now, isn't that interesting?" said Walters. "We will come to-morrow."

When Jones returned to the academy he found Hudson waiting for him with a broad smile.

"The first big fish has aroven," said Hudson. "He is an Englishman. I gave him a treatment several days ago to develop his bump of clairvoyancy. I told him to stare hard at a leather wallet which was lying on my desk. Then asked him to tell me how much money it contained."

"How should I know?" he asked. 'I can't tell.' I told him he could tell if he only tried. I asked him to mention an amount and look me in the eyes? 'Well,' said the big boob, 'suppose I say one hundred and seventy dollars?' I told him he was right to the penny."

"But was he?" asked Jones.

"There was nothing in the wallet at all," laughed Hudson, "but I got busy with the back work. I slipped a note to Mrs. Hudson and after a little while she came in and asked for a postage stamp. As she went over to the desk to get the stamps she slipped the right amount into the wallet. Then after a little more hot air I walked with the Englishman



toward the door. I knew what was in his mind all the time. He looked at the desk and said: 'That was awfully funny, sir. Really! I had no idea, don't you know, that I was that good already. My word—can it be possible?'

"'Oh yes,' I said. 'Look at the wallet yourself.'

"He counted the money and almost fainted when he saw that he was a real mind-reader. Then he almost refused to leave the room. He told me that he no longer doubted anything under the sun and considered that he had been a first class rummy all his life until he met me. Then I sprung the diamond mine on him and gave him a nice rough diamond to take to a cutting establishment and see what it was for himself. I told him to charge the expenses of cutting and polishing the stone and bring the jewel back. Last night he brought it back saying it was first water quality and worth two hundred. Well, I told him about the mine and he wants ten thousand dollars' worth of stock. Where are the certificates? Where is the company?"

"I have the address of a nice, respectable crook out in California who will sell me a bale of certificates signed in blank for about ten dollars," said Jones. "I will wire to-night. They ought to be here in five days. In the meantime, get the boob's check."

That evening Hudson delivered his maiden lecture before about seventy of the students and patrons of the academy who had received engraved invitations.

He said in part: "Materially inclined persons ask me how I benefit by my wonderful power. I ask you, what good can one not accomplish by those means? It pains me to state that I have become wealthy, some say a millionaire through the gift of ultra-clairvoyancy. I have fought against this influx of wealth, I have offered up silent prayers to my Nirvana to escape from the thralldom of money, but it is the dire consequence of my mysterious gift. That is the only sad and objectionable side to the whole matter.

"If you hate wealth and riches, by all means stay away from the gift of penetration, as I call it. It is certain to bring

upon you the burden of wealth. I will give you an instance. If you are contemplating the purchase of lands, real estate, stock, and bonds of any sort, in fact if you are to place your investments, you will find that those who are clairvoyantly able to 'penetrate' can see the ultimate fate of them. You can see the dividends as they flutter towards you. You can also see the sham and lure in dishonest propositions. Under such circumstances it is impossible to touch the worthless and, I regret to say, it is impossible to ignore the meritorious things which are offered.

"As a child I began to see things and my dear old mother used to cry her eyes out when she saw her little curly-headed darling shake hands with the air—saw how he was suddenly swinging through the blue empyrean on wings of no material substance.

"I was a child, dear friends, a mere toddling child of the flesh and blood of mortals, but I wot not that I was a privileged one. When I looked at the little Lutheran Church in our village, I thought nothing unusual of the fact that I saw the bright, white painted exterior like a haze before the scantily filled interior. When I looked at my father's iron safe, I could see the contents plainly through several inches of chilled metal. I believed, my dear beloved friends, that everyone had the gift of the sixth sense, that of penetration.

"But when I grew to man's estate I began to notice that other mortals were not gifted thusly. I have met some in my research travels in the Gobi desert and throughout the sands of Arabia, but here in the United States there are very few so blessed. My dear, beloved friend Professor Clifford-Jones, is one of the few who have the gift developed to a great degree and, of course some dozens of my pupils are more or less developed.

"Yet friends, I say yet, friends, it is a simple matter. We can all be that way with proper training and devotion. It is just the same as learning to play a musical instrument. Practice makes perfect."

After the meeting, several men and women requested personal interviews

and appointments were made condescendingly by Hudson on the grounds that he was anxious to help his flock, but warned them from the lure of wealth.

Along the line of "penetration," Hudson could see the diamonds in the depths of the new mine and declared he simply could not help getting rich. In consequence he took orders and received money for several large amounts of stock and when the certificates of a defunct gas bubble arrived C. O. D. with a bill of ten dollars for several thousand dollars worth of stock, there was a scramble for it.

The quartette sat in the parlors of the academy early that evening and the conversation turned towards their future.

"When we get through with this," said Hudson, "it will be about time for that European trip. I figure that we will then be worth a clear hundred thousand dollars, each family. I have fifty-five thousand dollars in ready cash and I suppose you have about the same, Jones?"

"No, I have not," replied Jones. "The Gullah-Gullah business took a good deal and the fellow I sold out to, refuses to pay a cent. Being a sad fake, it is not collectible. But I have about thirty thousand dollars in clear cash."

"Well, a hundred thousand between us is better than squatting at a dollar per day," said Hudson, reminiscently. "We are going up, all right."

"When will we retire?" asked Jones. "We can keep this thing up another month or so until the diamond mine begins to peter out. The mind reading is a good thing to fall back on. I also have a scheme for a sunken treasure hunt which we can skin almost anyone on. I will tell you about that later. One boob came in here and told me all about a noiseless soap or something, the other day. Why, there will be no end to the propositions we can handle; but let us land Walters for all he and his wife have got and go abroad. I am studying French now."

"You are right," sighed Hudson. "We can never tell when we will get one of those downward jolts that will put us in the coffee and doughnut class again. But

it will never be the poor-house as long as printers can turn out stock certificates. In the meantime let us pick up all we can until the big tumble of Walters and *Frau*."

"I am already doing it," said Jones. "In addition to the pikers' fees for readings, I get anywhere from twenty-five dollars and up for special spirit service. I can easily trim a few of the lovelorn but I have gathered in as much as a thousand already, in cases of women who have opened up and told me how dearly they loved other wives' husbands. I always soak them the limit and then scare them to death and wring out the moisture."

"That's all right," said Mrs. Jones. "I have no sympathy for that kind of cats."

"Me neither," said Mrs. Hudson. "Give them the Old Harry, Mr. Jones."

"Just think of it," said Jones. "In came a woman the other day and wrote a question something like this on the tablet:

"How soon before my husband will die? When will I marry Pete?"

"I could hardly refrain from kicking her out and charged her all she had in her pocketbook after giving her a fine reading to the effect that she would die at least three years before her present husband. You see, we have the back work down so fine now that Mrs. Jones goes through their pocket-books as they leave them on the small table by the wall. I often scare the life out of them by telling them every little thing they cart around in their shopping bag in addition to the powder-puffs and the rouge. And you ought to see some of them."

"Sure," said Hudson. "I have the same experience upstairs. The more educated they are, the heavier they fall for the game. They grasp the fine points and are too ladylike to be suspicious. Me for the society dope, every time."

"I had a swell daughter of the American-something-or-other come in yesterday all out of breath," continued Jones. "She was bristling and shot sparks in all directions. She introduced herself by handing me a twenty dollar bill and then ordered a first class, high power

hoodoo on the woman in the opposite flat. I didn't even know the address, but sent one of my most bloodthirsty and mean Cherokees to the place and, would you believe me, this morning a butler came in from the daughter of Something-or-other and handed me a hundred and a note of thanks. It was quick action. Luck would have it that the woman in the opposite flat fell down last night and broke her leg. She put me on to more trade and a while ago her cousin called me up and asked me the price for stopping a bum piano player at least two hours per day. I am going to send both these women to you, Hudson. They are good for a big, legitimate investment. Are you going to increase the capitalization of the Diamond Mine?"

"Yes," replied Hudson. "I have ordered the printers to increase it to five hundred thousand dollars."

Just then Mr. and Mrs. Walters and one Mr. Lovelace were announced. Mrs. Walters was a tall, theatrical-looking woman with fiery hair and long jet earrings. She wore a gorgeous lace gown and wore a large quantity of jewelry. Lovelace was introduced as her attorney, retired from general practice and hailing from Reading, Pa. Mrs. Walters was soon taken in hand by the women and was invited to the living rooms upstairs.

"Professor Hudson and Professor Jones: I feel as if I owe you all I have on earth and all I am going to get," she said as she walked slowly upstairs. "I did not really know what to think about occult matters until I saw what you did for us. We certainly had the great and blessed truth dawn upon us in a very substantial and convincing manner."

Hudson and Jones bowed profoundly and Walters wiped his moist eyes. "Gentlemen," began Walters. "Mr. Lovelace is our trusted friend. We leave all our affairs to him."

The spiritists eyed the tall, gaunt stranger and felt ill at ease.

"Yes," said Lovelace, meekly. "My dear Walters, you have always found me the true and unselfish friend. I will promise you to act as the loyal watchdog of your interests as long as I live."

"Ah, how noble!" said Hudson.

"There are few men who would be better suited," said Jones. "Yes, indeed."

"A-hm, gentlemen," said Lovelace. "I have long since abandoned the profession. I am retired. But I am still attorney-at-law and attorney-in-fact for Cynthia Walters and her husband. Mrs. Walters was Mrs. Lovelace's schoolmate and Ferdinand Walters used to ride on my knee. I consider it a sacred duty to guard their mutual interests in such a manner that they will add to their perfect happiness by comparative affluence."

"Quite so," said Hudson, yawning.

Mr. and Mrs. Walters suddenly asked to use the telephone and left the room. As soon as he was alone with the spirit-u-alists, Lovelace said in a whisper:

"I wish it understood, gentlemen, that I receive no compensation for my service from my friends. They leave everything to me. Do we understand each other? I want to confer with you, gentlemen, alone—later."

Keeping perfectly calm and pretending not to see the innuendo, Hudson replied:

"Very well, Mr. Lovelace. We are here every day. We will be glad to see you." It was agreed that Mr. Walters' chauffeur should come the next day, Sunday, and call for the two professors and their wives and take them to the Walters residence to dinner, and after considerable conversation about the great success of the occult business, the three visitors departed.

The huge limousine car stopped in front of a magnificent house in the most fashionable part of Germantown the next noon. Mr. and Mrs. Walters came out on the large columned porch and greeted their guests and Lovelace waved the comic section of his Sunday paper at them from inside the plate glass parlor window.

Everything in the house bespoke affluence and even good taste. A number of valuable paintings adorned the great vestibule. Tiger and lion skins lay on the highly polished floors. Teak and mahogany furniture of antique make abounded and the dining room was resplendent in cut glass and plate.

"This looks pretty good to me,"

whispered Hudson to Jones. "It's all ours, already."

"And then some," echoed Jones. "It must be Mrs. Walters who has all this good taste. Walters doesn't know a Titian from a Sunday supplement. They have a cottage at Newport, too, I gather."

After a sumptuous repast, Mrs. Walters played the automatic piano and Lovelace set off a few operatic pieces on the phonograph.

"Just think," soliloquized Mrs. Walters. "When we lived in dreary old Trenton and when I and my sisters had to support the whole family, Ferdie was nearly crazy working and tinkering away on the models of his cream separator. And poor mother was so pale and thin from worry and over-work."

"All those things only make us appreciate things so much more now," rejoined Walters, passing around a box of twenty-five cent cigars. "I know we would have been in the dumps this very day had it not been for John, the Indian guide. Can you see him anywhere around me, Professor Clifford-Jones?"

"He is sitting on the mantel-piece close to your right shoulder," said Jones, "and he has a whole tribe of other guides with him."

"What a blessed thing it must be to be the master of other persons' destinies," sighed Lovelace admiringly. "I believe I will call around and see you, gentlemen, in regard to a thorough development course. I do not seek material matters. I have plenty of those, fortunately."

"Mr. Lovelace is almost a millionaire, you know," said Mrs. Walters. "He is the president of the Lovelace Steamship Company and president of the—"

"Please, please do not mention those little matters," interrupted Lovelace. "I do not desire any advertising."

"Pardon me, sir—you forget that we know all those things and more," smiled Jones, affably. "We simply know these things clairvoyantly."

"I have had Mr. Lovelace lay the plans of your great religious-industrial enterprise before me," said Mrs. Walters. "Both I and Ferdie think it is just too great for words. I can see without dia-

grams how you can make all kinds of money on it. You must have a large following and I know personally that many of your disciples are very wealthy. You propose to buy a tract of land with my money and some of yours. This you will do in my name. Then you will recommend that the congregation buy the land from Mrs. Walters and they will pay me something like five times the sum it cost us. That is honest business and is done every day. I have made up my mind to place one hundred thousand dollars in your hands and Mr. Lovelace will look after my interests."

Walters suddenly blushed and held up a warning hand. Then he asked with caution:

"Beg pardon, professors, but since Mrs. Hicks and Mrs. Clifford-Jones are with you and you all are here to enjoy yourselves, would it not be better to stop talking shop to-day?"

"We do not object to it for that reason," smiled Hudson, "but we regard the Sabbath and—er—really—um, never talk business on that sacred day. Personally I am sick of money but I will not stand in your way. The project will also aid the cause greatly and I will be glad to assist you in any manner on any week day. I am sure Professor Clifford-Jones feels the same way about it."

After an evening of small talk, the guests departed and were taken back in the big machine. The following morning Lovelace called early. After depositing his hat and gloves decorously in the reception room and after looking behind screens, curtains and going through a manoeuvre of opening and shutting doors suddenly in order to surprise possible eavesdroppers, he sat down.

"Gentlemen," he began. "I am instructed by Mrs. Walters to confer with you. She has one hundred thousand dollars ready and can get more. She owns the house you were in yesterday and thirty acres of ground worth from six to twelve thousand dollars per acre. This hundred thousand is chiefly in convertible bonds and ready currency. Now gentlemen, may I stipulate that this is in confidence?"

They both solemnly nodded.



"My clients pay me nothing," continued Lovelace, "and yet I think it is no less than fair that I should make a little something on the transaction. I can sell the bonds in a couple of hours by sacrificing a fraction of a point and I will have the lady's money ready for you at once. Now—where do I come in?"

"What do you want?" said Hudson drily. "We have plenty of money ourselves and we are not prepared to sacrifice."

"Mm," coughed Lovelace. "I think you had better suggest a basis."

"I will, if you show me the money," said Hudson. "Yet we need a large tract of land for our new Jerusalem, a spiritualistic settlement, a big temple, a university and several industrial buildings."

"We can handle it ourselves," said Jones. "We have enough followers now to start a whole city. What kind of a rake-off do you want?"

"All I can get," said Lovelace. "Somebody will get all the Walters' have some day. It may as well be me. I am not in this for my health. Mr. and Mrs. Walters appear keen and worldly people but you know what they are—mere upstarts from a poor Trenton inventor of a cream separator. Walters will have an income enough to live like a millionaire anyhow. And it's funny how they do trust me. Gimme a cigarette."

The ice was broken and Jones kicked his legs up on the table and as the room was rather warm Hudson removed his coat. The sight of Lovelace smoking a cigarette and inhaling the smoke, filled the hearts of the professors with joy and confidence.

"Suppose we split even," said Lovelace. "We take \$33,333.33 each. You do as you darn please with yours and I go south with mine. I only wish we could get our mitts on all of their money. And we may, for that matter."

"What does Mrs. Walters expect for her investments?" asked Hudson. "She wont hand the money over blindly to a bunch of strangers. Does she believe we are fakers or square?"

"Gracious," cried Lovelace. "Don't even suggest anything but the square game. She believes you are next to the

Almighty and really feels you are the guardian angel. She relies upon me to watch her investment. I will guarantee her big commercial returns."

"Well," said Hudson, "We leave that to you. Make it look like a privilege for her to get in on the new Jerusalem and we will get some cheap artist to make a sketch for a statue of you at once."

"The money will be forthcoming as soon as you like," said Lovelace. "I get a third, do I?"

"You do."

Lovelace fell back into his dignified and pedantic demeanor and stalked out of the house.

Hudson and Jones watched him from behind the parlor curtains. He stopped and petted a mangy dog, paid a nickel for a penny newspaper, and threw a handful of oyster crackers, of which he evidently carried a supply, to a flock of sparrows.

"Isn't he the noblest, dearest and most benevolent, miserable scoundrel you or I ever met?" said Hudson. "Gee, what a crook! When such monsters roam at large, there's no chance of us ever wearing the zebra suit, eh?"

"We will have to give him his third, though," said Jones.

"Sure," said Hudson. "But it will be the most painful duty I ever perform."

Two days later Lovelace brought Mrs. Walters to the academy. He announced that everything was in readiness for the transaction, that the bonds had been converted into currency; he handed Hudson three certified checks drawn by a prominent stock broker and bearing the certification of one of the leading financial institutions of the city.

"There is nothing wrong about these," remarked Hudson, throwing the checks on the desk in front of him. "They merely need the endorsement of Mrs. Walters."

"Certainly," smiled the attorney. "Mrs. Walters will make them payable to you gentlemen as soon as we have a little memorandum drawn up. She wishes to have everything in black and white."

"That's only business," said Jones. "The proper papers should be made out. Suppose we have the agreement written and meet here again?"

This was satisfactory to all parties concerned and Mrs. Walters decided to go shopping for a while, leaving Lovelace with the professors.

"Now friends, here is a vital point," began Lovelace then. "It is an easy matter to get a still larger amount from Mrs. Walters. She ought to be shown that you have actually made lots of real money here. She likes the new Jerusalem scheme and does not care what she invests. As we were riding down here she asked me if I really thought you were as prosperous as you say."

"We can show her that her little roll of coin is not such an awful much," laughed Hudson. "Right here we have securities and currency to the tune of more than eighty thousand dollars. It's merely lying around here loose."

"She knows nothing about securities," said Lovelace, confidently. "But she knows real money when she sees it. Show her good, actual green and yellow bills. I will have her here whenever you say. When I excuse myself to go to the telephone in that next room, you can flash the money on her. Watch my feet under the screen that stands around the telephone table and when I cross my legs, you change the subject. You can do these things, you know. One of you can sit by the door there and watch my feet.—Say, I have a bunch of money. If you like, I can lend you a bunch for your bluff."

"Not at all necessary," said Hudson. "We have a bushel basket of the long green here ourselves."

The appointment was made for the next day and in the meantime Hudson and Jones gathered together every dollar they had. They never kept money in banks and were always ready to leave for parts unknown.

"You better have a pistol handy," said Jones, as they sat waiting for their victims. "You know that that bundle represents all we have on earth."

"Look," said Hudson and lifted a corner of a newspaper which was apparently lying as it had been thrown on the desk. The handles of two large-caliber revolvers shone brightly from under it.

"You are right, Jones," he added. "One can never tell what may happen."

Hudson was reading a magazine and Jones was deeply engrossed in a huge illustrated copy of the Koran when Mr. and Mrs. Walters and Lovelace arrived.

"We have very little time to spare," said Lovelace. "We merely dropped in to fix this matter up."

He read an elaborate agreement which promised Mrs. Walters fifty per cent per month on her investment after the first year and gave her first mortgage on any or all property or properties which the new enterprise would acquire.

Here Lovelace suddenly remembered that he ought to telephone some one. As he stepped into the next room and behind the screen he called out to Walters:

"Oh, Mr. Walters—what is the number of the Girard Fidelity Company?"

"I will find it for you in the book," replied Walters and went into the middle room.

Hudson and Jones heard the two men rattle with the leaves of the telephone book.

"Mrs. Walters," said Hudson affably. "We believe that you are now going to get more money than you ever had. I can see it coming your way."

"I hope so," she smiled. "I really feel that way, too. I suppose you make all sorts of money here?"

"Money," snorted Hudson, throwing a large bundle of bills of big denominations across the desk. "There is about eighty thousand in cold cash that we have not banked yet."

"Well, I declare," exclaimed Mrs. Walters. "Just think of it! I never handle great quantities of cash. I always use checks. Look at these—they are thousand dollar bills? Does the letter 'M' stand for a thousand?"

"Yes; that's right," said Hudson. "Just look at some of the ten thousand dollar bills there. I believe there are some of them in that bundle. Some special service fees for Professor Clifford-Jones, you know."

Hudson pretended not to take any particular interest in the money but was secretly watching every move as Mrs. Walters removed the rubber bands

around the bundles and with unconcealed fascination looked over the money. Jones had her under surveillance both front and back by the aid of a large mirror. She pushed the large bundle back across the desk to Hudson and he carefully counted the smaller bundles and looked at each big bill separately.

"I may as well count this now," he said, "and I will make out a deposit slip while I am at it—such a botheration!"

He counted it carefully and nodded to Jones as if to say that everything was intact. Then he pushed the large package behind his left elbow, where it was totally concealed by a row of letter files. The files were empty but were used to conceal the sliding panel through which Mrs. Jones did her "back work." Hudson was sitting at Jones' desk.

"Well, Professor," said Mrs. Walters. "I can't help admiring your methods and trusting you implicitly. I will give you a check now for the entire hundred thousand."

"I understood you had certified checks," smiled Hudson. "You might as well use those. Those you had before."

Mrs. Walters called her husband back from behind the screen where he and Lovelace seemed to have some difficulty in getting a number.

"How is this, Ferdie?" asked Mrs. Walters. "Can't I simply draw a check for one hundred thousand on my account?"

"You can if you have the money on the account," said Walters. "Sweetheart—you are a poor business woman. Did you deposit the certified checks?"

"No, I have them in the safety deposit box."

"Then all you have to do, dearest, is to go over there and get them and write your name across the back of them and turn them over to these gentlemen. I will go and get them for you. It will only take a minute in the machine."

"They won't let you into the vault at the bank," laughed Mrs. Walters. "I have to go personally. They are in my own box. You come with me. We will be back in a few minutes."

Hudson and Jones escorted them to the front door. They stepped out on the side-

walk on Walters' invitation to see the new limousine top. Then they walked back and sat in silence.

"I guess that isn't half bad," began Hudson in a whisper. He spoke in a low voice, seeing Lovelace's feet still beneath the screen.

"What will we do with it?" asked Jones. "Europe or the Orient?"

"I was just thinking."

"Say, Hudson—take that bundle of money and put it back in the wall safe. My part of the boodle has brown paper strips on it and yours has white."

Hudson turned in the swivel chair and reached for the money.

It was gone.

He glanced down at the floor. There was nothing there. Then with a face of a deathly paleness he stared at Jones.

"Where in—"

"What's the matter, man?" cried Jones with a shrill, unnatural cry.

"Hush," said Hudson, biting his lip till it bled. "His nibs in there has got it. Look! The sliding panel—"

The small panel was open. The place where the money had been a few moments before was within ten inches of the opening.

"Jones, did you take that money away from here?" demanded Hudson, hoarsely.

"For Heaven's sake, Hudson, are you crazy? Perhaps it dropped down?"

Hudson sprang from his desk and bounded into the next room. He knocked the screen down with one violent kick. It disclosed an empty chair, a cut telephone wire and an open window.

With an inarticulate cry, he sprang for his hat and with one accord the two men ran for the front door. Jones stooped down as he passed the desk and searched the floor. It was in vain.

He arose and reeled as he stared at Hudson and then sank down in a chair, quivering, shaking. Hudson fairly ran up and down the floor, cursing with bleeding lips and grinding his teeth. He hurled one oath upon another. Then, without a word to each other, the two men ran out of the house.

"Stung, by thunder, stung and done up brown at our own game," snarled Hudson as they stood waiting for a taxi-

cab. "Skinned—by the rottenest, cru est little piece of sneak work! Trimmied clean! They took all we had. But I admire them, they could show us a few. But perhaps we can head them off!"

Jones moaned and rolled his eyes. The machine pulled up to the curb and Hudson had to assist Jones in, for he stood staring at the clouds and muttering to himself. They sat in silence until they reached the Germantown residence. There they found a colored man in sole charge.

"Anybody home?" asked Hudson.

"No, sir," replied the man. "Say—you'd better pay me that twenty-five. I never saw those people again."

"What people?"

"Why, them blamed liars that entertained you here last Sunday. They comes to me and asks to use the house for one day. They offers me so much that I can't resist and after leavin' the dishes dirty and everything upset, they skips and that's the las' I seen of them. When the boss comes back from Europe, I will get the old Nick, sho'."

"That's about enough here," fumed Hudson. "Hey, driver! Now go to Trenton. Hang the expenses and tear the tires off her. Break any speed law you know of."

Not even the cool breeze on the ferry across to Camden restored Jones to talking strength. He gazed feebly at Hudson, but seemed unable to speak. Then he collapsed into one corner and stared at his knees all the distance to Trenton. As the machine stopped in front of 4444 Princeton avenue, Hudson jumped out. It was a little, green-painted cottage. A man was sweeping the doorstep.

"Do you know a Mr. Walters?" asked Hudson.

"Which one of them?" asked the man. "They live here."

"I would like to see Ferdinand Q. Walters."

"That's me," said the man and kept on sweeping. "I guess you want one of my brothers. They are both out in the yard working on the hen-coop. I don't know you."

Hudson staggered. Jones made a little

jump and settled down again with a long, moaning sound.

"Say, do you own a patent?" almost sobbed Hudson.

"Yep, on a new cream separator," replied the man, putting the broom aside and for the first time taking a good look at his visitors. "Wont you come into the house? I am sorry, though, I can't show you all about it. Some rascal stole my overcoat some time ago and the patent papers and some contracts were in the pockets. The case is in the hands of a mail order detective who is connected with a firm in Washington run by a Colonel Green. I—"

"Wow!" yelled Hudson. And the utterly astonished inventor watched in amazement as he jumped back into the machine and rattled away.

"This beats the devil," muttered Hudson as the car started up. "It's bad enough to be stung, but I wont have it rubbed in."

Staggering around like two drunken men, they reached the academy. Their wives, who had been to a matinee and afterwards had done a little shopping, greeted them with great astonishment. Hudson gazed upon his wife's diamonds with a sigh of relief. They had never looked so beautiful to him. Jones was staring at the hole in the wall. Hudson stepped into the other room and picked up a pair of patent-leather shoes, near the screen.

"Hm—an old trick!" he muttered. "That infernal scoundrel took off his shoes and put them under the screen so that it looked as if he were there all the time. In the meantime, he did a pretty little piece of back work. I thought all the time he was waiting for a telephone call."

With an oath he flung the shoes out of the window.

"Whose are those?" asked Mrs Hudson, alarmed at her husband's strange conduct.

"They belong to Mr. Lovelace—the world's champion money separator," he replied, as a big tear rolled down his cheek. "I have had an overdose of my own medicine, dear. Jones and I have decided to go to work for a living."



# The Flower Vendor's Story

BY  
JAMES FRANCIS DWYER

Author of "Red O'Neill," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY KYOHEI INUKAI



The Octopus

I AM an old fool. I have been a fool as long as I remember; I have been old since the youth went out of my heart. It went out suddenly, and age sprang upon me like the darkness that pounces upon the spot of light when you extinguish a candle. She was the candle, and when She went all was darkness.

That was a long time before I met "Grouch" O'Grady. Life had resolved itself into an endless, gray film, and, curiously, it was O'Grady's little flower stand that brought about a change. I was a landscape gardener when—when the candle went out, and then— Well, I went to pieces. Engagements I could get, but I could not hold them. The wheels had clogged— I lacked driving power.

But flowers always attracted me. Some one has said that when good women die they become flowers, and perhaps that was why O'Grady's little stand became a magnet to me.

One day "Grouch" looked up from a letter that he was reading when I wandered into the little bandbox with its million and one sweet odors, and he waved his hand at the blooms around him.

"What do you say to this?" he asked.

"To what?" I stammered.

"To this stand," he replied. "It's just the thing for you. You understand flowers, and you're doing nothing much—"

"But you?" I spluttered.

"I'm going West," said "Grouch." "I've got a brother who is digging holes

in search of gold out at Bullfrog, and he wants me to come out so that he can inoculate me with the disease."

"But the money?" I gurgled. I had wasted so much of my time in dreams that my little stock of money had slipped away from me, and the small sum that "Grouch" would require for his business was more than I could raise.

"Give me what you can now and pay the balance to my sister," said "Grouch." "I guess you wont do me out of it. I never saw a guy that loved flowers—loved 'em like you love them—that was crook enough to do anyone out of a cent."

And that is how I became the owner of the little flower stand which immediately became a shield to me. The atmosphere of that world of which I had grown afraid, seemed to be strained through a thousand perfumes in that little place, and the fear which had gripped me fled. Then I began to see how "Grouch" O'Grady had grown wise in that place. It was easy to learn there. The people who had souls seemed to show them there, and if they hadn't a soul—Well, they hadn't, that was all.

There was one big, greasy brute—a great, oily caricature of a man, who bought a lot of flowers to send up to a little variety actress at the St. Helena apartments in the next block. He hated flowers. The coarse brute told me that he hated them, and I grew to hate him on that account. He ridiculed the blossoms that were a shield to me from the world that I was afraid of. To myself I called him The Octopus.

"I detest all this garden truck," he growled, one day when

he had ordered me to send two dozen roses up to the St. Helena. "It's throwing money in the gutter to buy the rubbish. If it was a dinner—wines, meats, or things like that, it would be different."

A lump came up in my throat the size of my fist, but I choked it back. I choked it back the next day and the next, when he aired his opinions in the same fashion. I waited till I had paid "Grouch" O'Grady's sister the balance of the purchase money, then—Ah, I was never so overjoyed in my life! It was wrong of me to be revengeful, but he had ridiculed the blossoms that were everything to me.

"Send up a couple of dollars worth of this truck," he ordered, pointing to the violets that were banked up against the window. "Gee! it makes me mad to pay good money for this—"

"You can't pay money for it," I screamed.

"Why?" he asked.

"They're sold!" I yelled. "They're sold, confound you! And everything in my shop is sold when you come to buy! Clear out, and talk about garden truck in some other place!"

He looked at me as if I were a madman—I guess I *was* one at that moment—then he backed out the door, and



"I'm going west," said "Grouch"

I quieted down. It was a moment's delicious madness though.

It was a peculiar coincidence that I should have met The Boy and The Girl for the first time on the day that I quarreled with The Octopus. They will always be The Boy and The Girl to me. He came into the tiny store while she stood with her white face pressed against the glass in front of the bank of violets which I had refused to sell to the oily brute a few hours before.

I was busy at the moment, but I noticed her white face. The big eyes looked as if they were hungry—hungry for the violets. Bless you! I knew when a real flower lover stopped in front of my place. I grew wise in that little store. "Grouch" O'Grady had grown wise there. Didn't "Grouch" say that he could trust a flower lover when he went away and took my word for the balance of the money?

I had three other customers in the place when The Boy entered, and he stood back from the small counter with a blush upon his face. For a couple of minutes he stood waiting, then he backed timidly out the door and touched The Girl upon the arm. I was watching the little performance out of the corner of my eye, because the flower hunger on her face had attracted me when she pressed it up against the glass as if trying to sniff the fragrance of the violets that were inside.

When The Boy touched her arm she looked up with a quick glance of expectation that immediately changed to disappointment when she saw that his hands were empty. For a moment she listened to what excuse he offered, then she rushed through the door and came towards me hurriedly as if afraid that her stock of courage would give out before she explained her wants.

"Could I—could I have five cents' worth?" she gasped.

I knew I hadn't made a mistake when I saw that look upon her face as she stared through the glass.

"Of what?" I asked. The other customers had left then, and the place was empty.

"Of the violets," she stammered. "He

—he came in, but he was afraid to ask for them. He thought you would not sell five cents' worth."

I took a great bunch of the violets and handed them to her. "May I present them to you?" I asked. The adoration in the white face as she leaned forward to take the flowers was a salve that took the sting from the wound made by the words of The Octopus a few hours before.

"No—no!" she cried. "You are kind—very kind, but I must pay." She put the nickel on the counter and ran out, her big, hungry eyes thanking me as she looked over the blossoms which she had pressed against her white face.

That was the first visit of The Boy and The Girl. Next morning they came along together, and he came in smiling, while she nodded to me from the doorway. He wasn't more than twenty-two, while she was only nineteen. I found that out later.

"Can we get another nickel's worth?" asked The Boy. Then he added: "But we don't want you to rob yourself like you did yesterday."

The Octopus had often bought two dollars' worth of flowers in a day, but that daily nickel order—they came every day after that—compensated me a thousand times for the loss of his custom. Loss? Why it was a gain to keep him out of the store.

Bless my heart, didn't that little girl love flowers! When she came into that tiny place, the air of which seemed to be a million thin strata of flower perfumes, she'd breathe and breathe as if her lungs would burst, and The Boy would stand by watching her breathlessly. He loved flowers too, but that little girl—why, she became etherealized in that scented atmosphere. The odors of the blooms intoxicated her, and those wonderful big eyes of hers glowed, as her nostrils drank up the perfume.

"Oh!" she cried, one morning when she and The Boy stood for a moment after making the usual purchase. "If I could work in this all day I'd feel well; I'm sure I would!"

That was the first time she had mentioned her illness, and that was weeks

after their first visit on the morning when I refused to serve The Octopus. After that I watched her. The white face seemed to be getting whiter each day, and her big eyes were getting bigger, while the thin nostrils— Bless me, how transparent they looked when they were breathing the scented atmosphere of that

hats in a sweatshop on the East Side. They hoped to marry some day, but he shook his head when he told me that. A vision of the girl's white cheeks and transparent nostrils came up before him as he spoke, and fear took the strength from the hope his words tried to express.



little bandbox! It seemed to me that she was trying to take with her each morning enough of that perfumed air to last her all day at her work!

The Boy told me that they were all alone in the world, two orphans without a single relative, and the struggle had been a hard one. He was clerking at a miserable wage for a downtown real-estate operator, while The Girl made

It was in the end of August that he came in alone one morning. The collapse had come, and The Girl was not able to go to work. He wanted to run back to the rooming house with the few cents' worth of flowers, but he was late then, so I took them when I went to breakfast and left them with the landlady.

I did that every morning for a month.



The Girl's condition did not improve. It seemed, from what The Boy repeated of the doctor's opinions, that she would never get better—not in that atmosphere. That white face with its faint patches of red on the cheeks, had been a distress signal for months, but, bless you! this city is too big and busy to take notice of such things. You can see them daily—poor, overworked girls who have run the red flag up into their cheeks to let the world know that they are besieged with the most terrible of all foes, but we cannot do much. I couldn't do much to help the little, white-faced girl in the stuffy rooming house. I'm such an old fool that I could only increase the bunch of flowers and sympathize with The Boy.

I grew to love The Boy during the months of her illness. Since the moment when the youth left me suddenly, I had loved nothing but flowers, but the loneliness of those two children—they were little more than children—brought a love that filled the emptiness that had come into my heart fifteen years before. The Boy had all the passionate purity and courage of a crusader, while the sick little girl who longed for the flowers so that they might kill the greasy odors of the rooming house, dragged my heart-strings till I clenched my bony hands and raved against the conditions that are. And I didn't think I had enough spirit to look an angry donkey in the face!

But all I could do was to take the daily bunch of flowers, with a few extra for the grim landlady who informed me that the delivery of the blossoms necessitated a walk up five flights of stairs. I didn't wonder at The Girl's hunger for those flowers. They were more important than food to her at that moment. The one-second whiff I got of those ancient threadbare carpets—is there anything more odorous than an old carpet?—made me alive to the longing for something that would do battle with the smells of the place.

As the fall went slowly by, The Girl's condition became more serious. The doctor advised her removal to a warmer climate as the only hope for recovery. The Boy brought me the news.

"He says the New York winter will kill her," he stammered, "and I—I don't know what to do."

I didn't know what to do, either. I said before that I am only an old fool, and it wanted a more vigorous mind than mine to get the little girl out of the fix that she was in. Bless you! I was such a big fool that I took no notice of what The Boy said when he stood in the store of evenings and made all sorts of threats about what he would do to save her life. And then it all came on me like a thunderbolt.

A policeman walked into my little flower box one afternoon in October and told me that The Boy wanted to see me.

"To see me?" I cried. "Why, where is he?" Intuition flamed within me at that moment, and I understood the wild talk of that youngster.

"He's arrested," said the policeman quietly. "He swiped a hundred dollars from his boss, and they caught him with the goods."

That was a terrible night for me. I'm a stupid in a matter of that sort, and imagination went foraging into the future and piled up a pyramid of misfortune that terrified me to contemplate. I was a fool—a doddering old fool! The Boy had said over and over again that he would get the money *somewhere*—the money that would take that little sick child to a warmer climate—but instead of warning him against doing anything foolish, I had mooned around stupidly amongst my flowers praying that something might happen to save her life. He had told me in language that would have been plain to an idiot that he intended to commit a robbery, but I had not understood.

It was just as the policeman had said. He was caught with the stolen money in his possession, and his guilt was clear. I got my landlord to go down with me to the precinct station and bail him out, and the next morning I decided to go and explain everything to his employer.

The money had been recovered, and I thought that, if the conditions which actuated the theft were fully explained, the charge would be withdrawn. I didn't tell The Boy where I was going. I kept

my own counsel, closed the little flower store and took the subway.

The junior partner heard my story, but he could do nothing. He said I might wait and see his partner, who would reach the office two hours later. I put the closed flower store from my mind and waited. If The Boy could be saved, something might turn up that would make it possible to follow the doctor's advice. Hope costs nothing, and I suppose that is why fools and poor people use such a lot of it.

The senior partner came at the end of three hours' waiting, and when he rolled through the office door, my heart sank. It was The Octopus.

He made no sign that he had ever met me before, and I told my story—told it falteringly, with hope stumbling at the end of every sentence. His cold, fishy eyes battered down the expectations that had come to life during the hours of waiting.



I was a landscape gardener

"It is a pretty story," he said, when I had finished. "Quite dramatic, aint it?"

"It is true," I stammered.

"Do you still sell garden truck?" he questioned.

"Yes," I answered.

"You know now that it *is* garden truck?" he snapped. "You are *certain* that it is?"

"Yes," I murmured. A greater love than my love of the flowers had taken possession of my heart since the morning when I had refused to fill his order, and if he pardoned The Boy it mattered little to me what he said.

There was silence for a few minutes; then he rose and pointed to the door. "Keep on selling the rubbish!" he cried. "If you sell enough of it you may be able to send the sick girl away and give employment to the thief when he comes out of jail. Good-morning."

I talked with The Boy that evening. His case was to come before the court the following day, and I wanted him to make an excuse to account for his absence—for an indefinite absence. The Girl mustn't know that he had gone to jail. I cried that evening. I'm an old

fool—I have always been an old fool.

I went with The Boy to the rooming house where the worn carpets gave out the peculiar odor. The Girl was sitting up in the shabby parlor, and the flowers which I had brought her the day before—I missed a day through my appointment with The Octopus—were at her elbow. Bless my heart! didn't she look white and fragile. She was as delicate as a piece of wonderfully thin china. The red flag upon her cheeks blazed defiantly, and the big eyes—Those eyes seemed to look through me and read the lie which I had concocted!

We told her the falsehood between us, one propping up the other when he weakened. It was hard work. A lie to me seems to be the cruelest thing in the world when I attempt to tell it, and there were some unpolished spots in the fabrication we manufactured for the little girl. The Boy was weak, and I was a bigger fool than ever as I stood there chattering stupidly in front of the big eyes that were possessed of the wonderful seeing power that comes to the very sick.

"And you'll probably go away to-morrow?" she murmured, after we had told the lame lie.

"Most probably," stammered The Boy. "He—his—"

"My friend will be going to-morrow, and he will take him along," I gurgled, and then I backed out the door and stood on the dark landing, leaving them to say good-by. They were two children, and it was hard to say which of the two had the roughest path to tread.

The Boy came out five minutes afterwards, weeping as if his heart would break. I was crying too. That little lonely child with her big, all-seeing eyes



"Could I—could I have five cents worth?" she gasped



I stood on the landing leaving them to say good-by

would make anyone cry if he stopped to contemplate her loneliness.

"And you'll get the flowers every day," blubbered The Boy, as he turned to close the door. "He—he'll bring them up to you, just the same."

The Boy was sentenced to a month's imprisonment. Lucky? Yes, he was lucky.

Then began a nightmare that extended over thirty days. Every morning I took up the bunch of flowers, and made attempts to pacify the landlady. I can't blame landladies. The good turns they

do are seldom written about, and those good turns are many. I know that grim, hard-featured woman was that kind. I proved it. Two weeks after The Boy went away, and when the board and lodging bill for the little sick girl had reached a figure that was the highwater mark of boarding-house trust, I had an intuition. I confided in her. I told her hurriedly what had happened to The Boy, and the reason which prompted the act.

For a moment he stared at me. Then she spoke.



"The blessed angel!" she cried. "Go away to your flowers; I'm going to cook some broth for the child upstairs."

One day the landlady told me that The Girl wished to speak to me. I had avoided her for some days, and I climbed the stairs with an uneasy conscience.

"He hasn't written," she said when I entered the parlor.

"He hasn't had time," I parried.

"But he will?" she cried.

"Surely," I gurgled. "He'll write the moment he gets there."

God help me! I told some lies during those few weeks. He couldn't write to her, and his silence was helping the disease. The big eyes tried to fathom the mystery, and I clumsily parried the questions which the bloodless lips fired at me.

The doctor met me on the stairs one day, and he shook his head. "She should be taken away," he growled. "If she is left here—" He passed on, muttering.

"Has the doctor spoken of his fee?" I asked the landlady.

"I told him everything, you stupid!" she retorted. "Do you think you're the only person in the world who would do a good turn? Sure, it would be a hard old place if Charity wasn't abroad."

It was the day before The Boy's sentence expired, and I sat wondering as to what could be done. The doctor had said the night before that her chances were slim if she remained in the North during the winter.

I was poking about amongst the flowers, wondering—wondering how it could be arranged. The Boy was penniless, and I was in the same fix.

Some one came into the store, and I looked up. There was a blur over my eyes at the moment, and I couldn't see the face of the man who had entered, but a big, strong voice that shook the little glass vases on the shelf, didn't leave me long in doubt.

"Gee!" roared the voice, "I've been longing for that smell for nine months and fourteen days! The only flowers they have in Nevada are cactuses, Hooper—yes, cactuses!"

It was "Grouch" O'Grady!

"I've come back to buy machinery," he explained, after he had shaken my hand till the bones cracked. "We've struck it rich, old sport. If you want to come out there as a sort of clerk—"

"I don't!" I cried. "But—'Grouch'—listen, 'Grouch'—" And then I pulled him to the little bench in the corner and told him the story of The Boy and The Girl.

"The poor little mites," he muttered, when I had finished. "The poor little—Say, what time does he get out?"

"Six o'clock," I gurgled.

"Then we'll meet him!" cried "Grouch." "And he can bring her out with him. Germs can't live in that atmosphere. They can't! It's that dry that the rain only gets half-way to the earth before the air absorbs it."

We met The Boy next morning, and "Grouch" O'Grady fixed up everything. Bless my soul, what a day we had! The little girl brightened up considerably, while the old landlady cried, and the doctor, who had a face like a stone Buddha, hurried down the stairs so that we couldn't see that his eyes were filling.

"Grouch" O'Grady came to see me the night before he went west, and just as I was closing up the store The Octopus came along. I tried to stop O'Grady, but I was too late. He gripped that big, oily brute by the arm before I could interfere, and he led him quietly to the window of my little flower box.

"Don't make a noise," said "Grouch."

"I want to ask you a question or two. I won't hurt you. Now, what is it that you see inside the store?"

"Flowers," spluttered The Octopus.

"Beautiful flowers," said O'Grady.

"Say it after me."

"Beautiful flowers," stammered the oily one.

"That's right," said "Grouch." "Now go home and ask God to irrigate your soul." And when he let go his grip The Octopus fled like a fat elephant towards the corner.

The Boy and The Girl? Oh, they're married now. In business at Reno—flower business. See, just because they loved flowers and because I am an old fool, everything worked out right, didn't it?

Miss Mary Boland as *Miss Heseltine*  
and John Drew as *Kobin Worthington* in "A Single Man"

Photograph by White, New York  
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Frohman



## NIGHTS AT THE PLAY

by Louis V. De Foe

MR. JOHN DREW has so long been regarded as the theatrical *Chantecler* whose mission is to wake the slumbering dramatic world at the dawn of the new year that New York has come to believe its season cannot really have begun until his call is heard in the Empire Theatre. Sometimes the restless younger birds of the stage—mostly feminine—raise a commotion before him, but, to cling to a paraphrase of Rostand, it is Mr. Drew after all who bids the sun to rise.

For a star whose duty is so onerous Mr. Drew of late has been growing singularly careless of his call. Not since he appeared as *Hillary Jesson* in Mr. Pinner's fine play, "His House in Order," four years ago, has he emitted a good, lusty crow. He has been chirping in-

stead in London drawing-room comedies, in a succession of characters differentiated principally by the clothes they wear. Now, after "Jack Straw," "My Wife" and "Smith," he comes forth again in "A Single Man" as the same familiar, sedate, middle-aged bachelor, romantically touched and in search of a wife.

Some one has said that Mr. Drew's plays must always have as their foundation a bridge table or a tea table. Mr. Hubert Henry Davies, the author of "A Single Man," explodes this theory by choosing so unstable a thing as a cradle as the cornerstone of his structure. There are, of course, huge possibilities in a cradle, but Mr. Davies has not made use of them in the manner that was to be expected from the author of that

clever satirical play, "The Mollusc." He has been content to write, instead, a prim, formal, conversational comedy which deals in a polite style with the politest kind of people and he has studiously avoided the sinews of real drama except in two short scenes. Much of the small talk in his piece is witty and diverting, but this superficial merit does not atone for the play's general lack of stability.

The character acted by Mr. Drew is *Robin Worthington*, a popular novelist, who has reached the dangerous middle age of forty-three, and whose sister-in-law, *Isabella Worthington*, has made up her mind that he must not die a bachelor. This resolve is strengthened by the almost paternal interest *Robin* has developed in the married *Worthingtons'* infant offspring, an interest which has stirred secret domestic longings in *Robin* himself. So *Mrs. Worthington* sets out to find him a wife and selects *Louise Parker*, her school chum, a flirtatious girl with mischief-making proclivities, whom she invites to her house to dangle before his eyes.

*Robin* forestalls his sister-in-law's efforts by choosing as a wife an eighteen-year-old romp, *Maggie Cottrell*. To this lively tomboy, whose tastes are devoted exclusively to tennis and other athletic sports and whose mind runs to the most superficial interests, the bachelor-novelist precipitously offers his affections, and is as precipitously accepted, only to repent at leisure when he finds himself almost reduced to a physical wreck in his efforts to keep up with her pace.

At this point *Robin* begins to realize that a far more suitable helpmate would have been his secretary, *Miss Heseltine*, whose beauty, gentle nature and substantial merit have completely escaped his notice during the five years she has been in his employ, although now they shine forth vividly in contrast to *Maggie's* superficiality and the harsh, calculating nature of *Louise*, who has in no wise given up her pursuit of him. Once, in an early episode of the play, *Robin* has sought *Miss Heseltine's* advice in the matter of his engagement to *Maggie*, and she has betrayed to the play's audience,

if not to the play's hero, that she had been loving him in secret for years. So when the final act arrives and *Maggie* has discarded her *fiancé* as too old for her, those who have followed the story are quite prepared for a charming little dinner table scene between *Robin* and *Miss Heseltine*, in which the former confesses his change of heart and the latter acknowledges that she has been in love with him all the time.

The two best scenes to which I have referred are those in which *Robin* seeks his secretary's advice concerning his first engagement and in which, when it seems to him that life is no longer worth living, he acknowledges his suddenly realized love for her. These episodes are entirely worthy of the man who wrote "Mrs. Gorrings's Necklace" and "The Mollusc," for they are deep in emotion, true in feeling and tender in sentiment. The wonder is that an author who is capable of fashioning such gleaming episodes could have been content to sacrifice the rest of his play to shallow drawing-room small-talk and trivial, obvious incident. "A Single Man" is better for them, but they do not quite save the play.

Possibly a different style of interpretation might disclose merits in the piece now unsuspected. Mr. Drew embodies *Robin* with his customary precision and clever command of all the tricks of comedy acting, but he does not once indicate the character's inner nature or give expression to its philosophical meaning. He sketches the part lightly, gives emphasis only to its humorous phases and covers it, as all who are familiar with his method will suspect, with the mantle of his own personality.

Miss Mary Boland gets much closer to the nature of *Miss Heseltine*, to whom she imparts a gentle refinement and sincere feeling, though she is inclined to pitch her performance in a needlessly dolorous key. Miss Carroll McComas probably carries out Mr. Davies' intention in the rôle of the romp, and Miss Thais Lawton gives the requisite tinge of harshness to the character of the scheming *Louise Parker*. Miss Louise Drew, the star's daughter, appears as the

Photograph by White, New York. Copyright, 1911 by Charles Frohman

Ivan Simpson as *Henry Worthington*; John Drew as *Robin Worthington* and Louise Drew as *Isabella Worthington* in "A Single Man"







Photograph by White, New York. Copyright, 1911 by Charles Frohman  
John Drew as *Robin Worthington* and Miss Thais Lawton as *Louise Parker* in "A Single Man"

sister-in-law, *Mrs. Worthington*, perhaps not with evidences of maternal instinct, but with a surer command of character than she has shown before. There are others in the cast, but the banal moments in the play fall to them.

The Empire Theatre long ago set a standard of its own in the staging and costuming of society comedy. In "A Single Man" it has made good its reputation. Of three luxurious scenes the first, representing *Worthington's* study, with its Jacobean furniture and rich hangings, is the most solid and beautiful.

**M**R. DANIEL FROHMAN, at the opening of his Lyceum Theatre this year, generously offered a helping hand to a new playwright. His philanthropy, I suspect, will bring more satisfaction to

him than pleasure to his audiences or money to his coffers, for "Thy Neighbor's Wife," a very slender comedietta by Mr. Elmer Harris, despite the clever idea around which it is written, is hardly of a quality to maintain the prestige which the Lyceum has so long enjoyed, or to claim a place among the fine examples of modern comedy which ordinarily are to be found on its stage.

The play becomes a greater disappointment because it is so easy to detect how, with a better inventive faculty and a keener sense of the humorous on its author's part, combined with that discretion in their use which comes from experience, the fabric might have been made so much better. Only four characters are concerned in the story, and this is also to Mr. Harris's disadvantage, al-

though "The Mollusc" has shown that a very effective drama may be written with a limited cast. It is not an easy matter, as a rule, to produce round, full harmonies on a lute with few strings.

The opening act is cleverly staged for it needs no more than a glance to suggest the story which is to follow. The twin houses with adjacent garden plots instantly reveal the peculiarities of their occupants. The *Robbins'* lawn, on which its owner is busy with a mower, is well kept, but within the house are signs of disorder and symptoms of slovenly housekeeping. The outside of the *Millers'* home is in a state of neglect, but through its windows is to be seen every evidence of the thrifty housewife.

Such indeed are *Mr. and Mrs. Robbins* and *Mr. and Mrs. Miller*, the young and newly-married neighbors who have taken to the suburbs through force of circumstances. *Robbins* inclines toward domestic pursuits and is unhappy because his wife's tastes run to frivolities and petty vanities. *Miller*, on the other hand, is a convivial fellow to whom the club presents more attractions than the home. He, too, is irritated, but because his wife, a paragon among housekeepers, resents his neglect of her.

These domestic tribulations, wearisomely reiterated and with interlarded panegyrics to the virtues of bed making and home cooking, fill most of the first act. Time is found, however, for the husbands, each convinced that he would be happier with his neighbor's wife, to plan a campaign of exasperation which they hope will lead to divorces and, after that, to a more congenial pairing.

In the next act the two wives have formed a counter conspiracy. Their feminine intuition has taught them what is uppermost in their husbands' minds, so they have agreed to an exchange of partners for a week under conditions of strict suburban propriety with an understanding that the substitution shall become permanent if it proves agreeable. During this transfer of mates each woman profits by the advice of the other and it is not long before the designing husbands, crestfallen and completely disillusioned, are ready to be taken back.

Now it is the women's turn to be obdurate, and they assert themselves until the two men abjectly beg for forgiveness.

Such a tangle as this presents unusual possibilities of humor and surprises, to say nothing of a liberal dose of wholesome domestic philosophy, notwithstanding that variants of it have been the common property of the theatre ever since *Mistress Page* and *Mistress Ford*, in the "Merry Wives of Windsor," hit upon a somewhat similar plan to bring their husbands to terms. But Mr. Harris misses his chance by giving no heed to probabilities. His devices for fun-making are so petty and obvious, and most of his dialogue is so trifling and barren, that the play succeeds in being irritating rather than amusing. There is enough talk about pies and biscuits to spoil one's appetite for a month, and there is some sermonizing dragged in about childless marriages which is both silly and beside the mark.

Miss Pamela Gaythorne as *Mrs. Robbins* has rather the best opportunities in the play, though her pronounced English inflections and manner belie the sentiments she expresses of the American housewife. Miss Alice John, as *Mrs. Miller*, is the more substantial character of the two, though her virtues grow less impressive as the play nears its end. Mr. Arthur Byron and Mr. Frederick Tiden are respectively *Mr. Robbins* and *Mr. Miller*. Both are very successful in making their characters' peculiarities seem real. If *Miller's* domestic frailties stamp him as something of a cad the fault is not due to Mr. Tiden's acting of the part, but to the uncertain drawing of the rôle by the author.

**M**R. FRANK MCINTYRE, in the new play, "Snobs," which Mr. George Bronson-Howard has written for him, will be the consolation this year of all the forlorn tribe of heavyweights. In the old melodrama, "The Round Up," Mr. Maclyn Arbuckle used to sigh, "Nobody loves a fat man," yet Mr. McIntyre, who has a girth fit for a fire-horse and is able to tip the scales at two hundred and fifty pounds, finds himself loved for himself alone at first



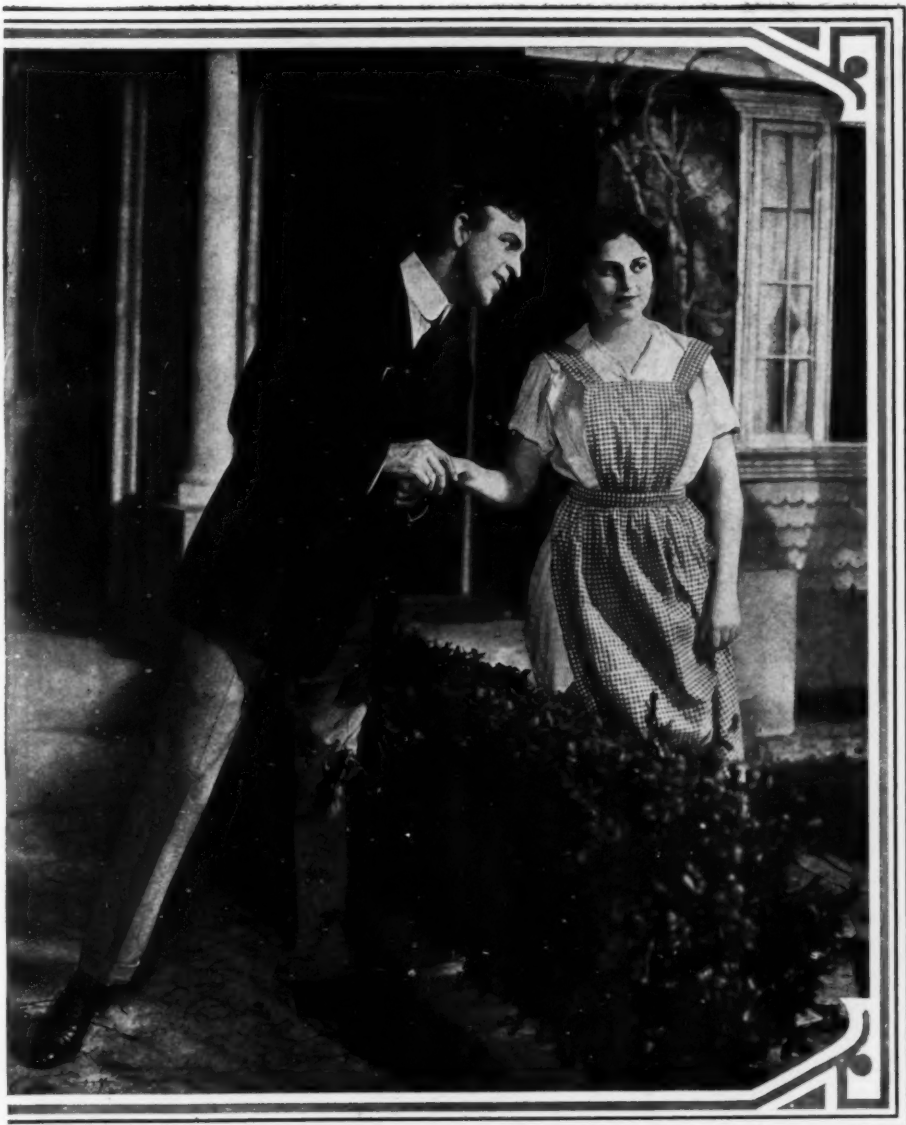
Photograph by White, New York

Fred Tiden as *Mr. Miller* and Miss Pamela Gaythorne as *Mrs. Robbins* in Elmer Harris' comedy, "Thy Neighbor's Wife"

sight by the daughter of the pickle magnate, and by matrimony in the last act proves the triumph of the tender emotions even over the obstacle of adipose tissue.

The character whose amorous adventures are crowned with good luck is *Henry Disney*, better known as "*Hank*" to the customers on his milk route, which lies somewhere in the neighborhood of

New York. His room is decorated with horse collars, scraps of harness, tin cans and other implements of his trade, and is shared by "*Buck*" *Reade*, a furnace tender in a factory, who is attempting to lift himself to a higher social level with the aid of cheap romantic novels and a dress-suit. To *Disney's* habitation comes *Nondas Parkyn*, whose family drawback is that her father began life



Photograph by White, New York

Arthur Byron as *Mr. Robbins* and Miss Alice John as *Mrs. Miller*, in the domestic comedy, "Thy Neighbor's Wife"

as an oyster shucker, though he afterwards became a preserver of pickles in something more than fifty-seven varieties and thereby acquired a fortune. She has been visiting a poor family upstairs and drops in upon *Disney* to ask him to summon a cab for her.

*Disney* might not have dared to smile upon his caller had it not been that *Phipps Maynadier*, a lawyer whose name

ought at once to establish his social position, had just brought the bewildering news that, through the death of all the other heirs, the milkman had come into vast titles and vaster estates in England, the list of which includes "five marble palaces, \$70,000,000, a string of hereditary coronets and the right to wear his hat in the presence of the king." All this good fortune puts another phase





Photograph by White, New York

Frank McIntyre as *Henry Disney*, the milkman-Duke, in his new starring vehicle "Snobs"  
by George Bronson-Howard



Photograph by White, New York

Frank McIntyre as *Henry Disney* and Miss Willette Kershaw as *Nondas Parkyn* in Mr. McIntyre's new starring vehicle, "Snobs"

on *Nondas's* visit and lightly turns "*Hank's*" fancies to thoughts of love.

Like the good and slangy American that he is, the milkman does not want to be loved on account of his possessions in England. He perceives that "*Buck*," his room-mate, is better qualified than he to bear the burden of high social distinction, so he proposes that "*Buck*" become the duke pro tem. while he, "*Hank*," is acquiring the polish that ought to go with it. As for "*Buck*," he is eager to become the substitute since he is harboring a secret affection for the proud and haughty *Laura Lanvale*, who could not be expected to smile upon a humble furnace tender. Besides, he is ambitious to put his new dress-suit into commission.

In the next act *Disney*, under the tutelage of *Maynadier* and resplendently arrayed in a checked suit, pink tie, blue spats and a job lot of jewelry, descends

upon a fashionable country club. The tidings of "*Buck's*" supposed good fortune have already gone abroad and, in a succession of comic scenes, the attentions of the elite are showered upon him while "*Hank*" is snubbed by everybody except *Nondas Parkyn*, whose father's pickle-making pursuits have relegated her to the outskirts of society. *Nondas* is so absorbed in *Disney* that she doesn't even notice that he is fat and of course she never once suspects that he monopolizes several pages of the British Blue Book and tax-roll.

At the town opera house in the last scene, between the acts of "*Man and Superman*"—Bernard Shaw save the mark!—the truth comes out. *Nondas* is pressed to a place as near as possible to the ex-milkman's bosom while *Laura* decides to accept his substitute and to try to forget that he once tended a furnace. All of which, according to the

author's way of thinking, is a barbed javelin thrust into the thick hide of snobs.

Mr. McIntyre should be given credit for a good deal of comic acting in the play. He cannot make his character as amusing as some of the others in which he has appeared, but he at least rises above the restrictions of his avoirdupois. An actress could not be much thinner than Miss Willette Kershaw, who appears as *Nondas Parkyn*, but her sense of humor helps out her limited abilities as a leading lady. Mr. Regan Hughston is "*Buck*" *Reade* and he succeeds in making the part a little more than a foil for Mr. McIntyre.

CAN it be that the automobile has at last included in the list of other crimes attributed to it the function of villain in the play? It would seem from "*Speed*," a new comedy by Mr. Lee Wilson Dodd, that the sinister nature of the motor-car has finally been found out by the stage.

Gasoline intoxication, according to Mr. Dodd, who proclaims himself to be no friend of the motor, is another of the forms of over-indulgence which lead to delirium tremens. Then he goes on to show how this nerve disease, if allowed to become chronic, may undermine the health, not only of the individual but the home.

The first of the speed-madness plays cannot be taken very seriously, though Heaven only knows to what it may lead! It surely will not meet with the approval of the automobile enthusiast, for some of its incidents, even if they be far fetched, cast the shadow of uncomfortable truths. But it will be consoling to the motorless man, to whom, to the oft-repeated question, "How can my neighbor afford to keep an automobile?" it shouts in each of its three acts the comforting reply, "He cannot!"

Without desiring to take sides in the argument, I must insist that some of the domestic evils in the play which are laid at the door of the *Jessups'* new car might easily have sprung from other sources. The machine which "chugs" repeatedly at the gate of their Long

Island country place is not to blame, for instance, for the smiles which the fat philanderer, *Billy Podmore*,—note the fitness of his name,—showers upon the lady of the house. Nor is it directly responsible for the bridge fever which threatens to scorch the moral fiber of *Mrs. Jessup's* nature. These same weaknesses in *Mrs. Jessup* might easily have developed in a motorless age. But when the deficit in *Mr. Jessup's* accounts is contemplated and the interest of the mortgage on his summer home begins to weigh heavily on his shoulders, the insidious workings of his money-eating luxury become apparent to the audience.

The play is strong in promise when the *Jessups* decide to use the \$1,200 they have saved for little *Wizzy's* education in order to satisfy the first craving of their motor fever. From this premise, which hints at a play which is to be vital to the problem of the automobile, a story of real moral import might have proceeded. But Mr. Dodd is not satisfied to let the automobile go ahead and do its worst at top speed. He brings instruments of evil other than the *Jessups'* new car to bear and presently the rubber-wheeled villain is almost lost to view in the cloud of dust stirred up by other influences.

Eventually everything in the *Jessups'* family affairs goes to smash. The surgical penalties of the secret joy ride overtake the cook. The automobile itself is wrecked. The only thing left intact is the mortgage on the *Jessups'* home. Even their domestic relations are fractured by the flying *débris*. Then they wake up from their gasoline dream and ruefully begin to gather together the scattered fragments of what was once their happiness. The inference gained at the final moment is that, in future, they will travel at slower speed and by a less dangerous means of locomotion.

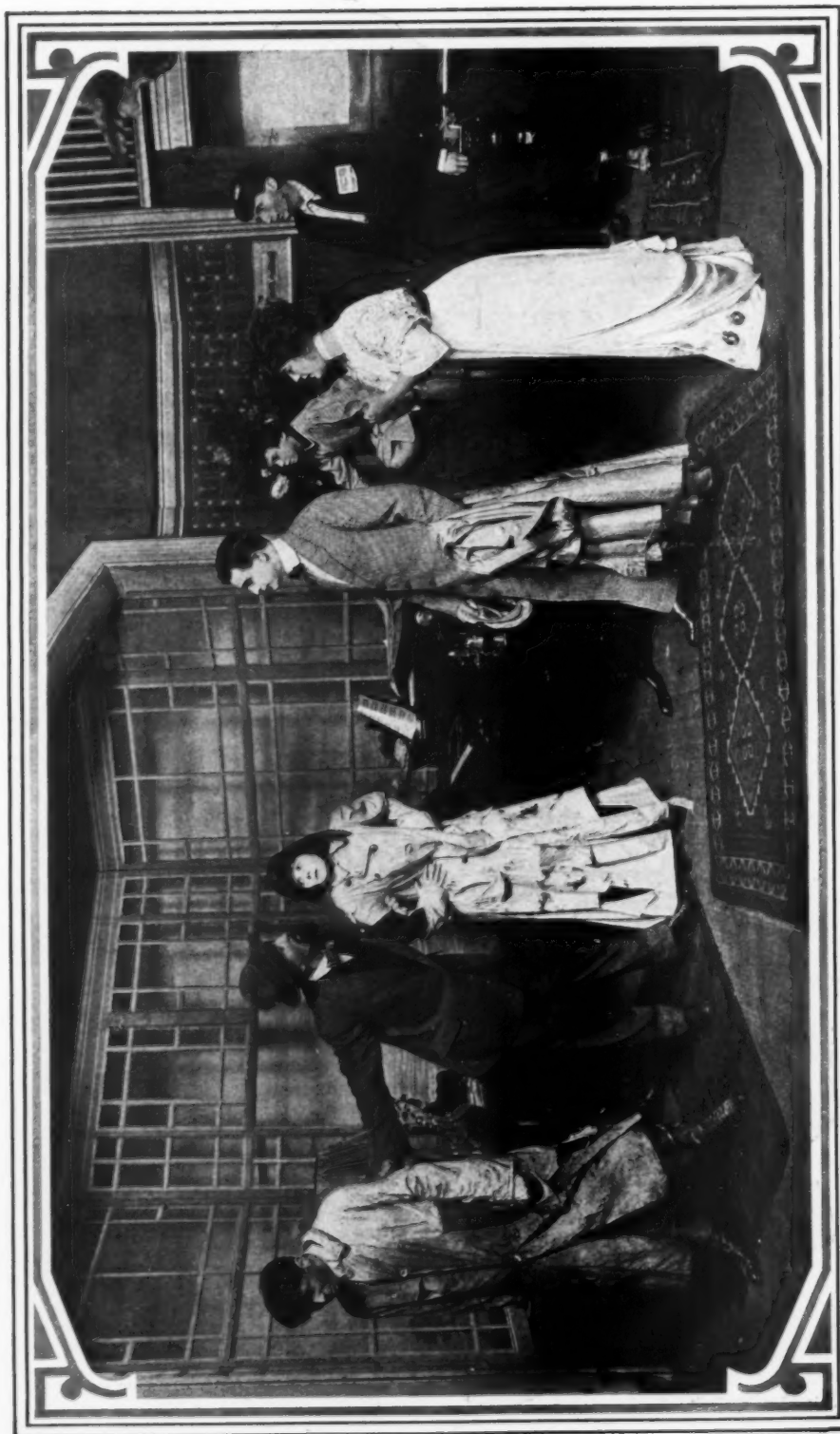
This new play, though not very formidable, is rather ingenious in its incidents and very facile in its dialogue. It is cleverly acted, especially by Miss Oza Waldrop and Mr. Orrin Johnson, who are the victims of motor madness, and by Mr. Eric Blind who, as *Frank Gray*, the family adviser, seeks to put on the



Photograph by White, New York

Orrin Johnson as *Edwin W. Jessup* and Miss  
Oza Waldrop as *Victoria Jessup* in "Speed"





Photograph by White, New York.  
 Frank Broder as Larry; Joseph Buckley as the Constable; Eleanor Hicks as Martha; Orrin Johnson as Jessup; Thomas Tobin, Jr. as "Wizzy" Jessup; Oza Waldrop as Victoria Jessup and John M. Stahl as Bill Green in "Speed"

brake when the *Jessups'* speed threatens to grow too furious for safety. But the salutary influence of *Gray's* conservatism explodes when, in the last act, he marries *Caroline Taylor* who, as impersonated by Miss Elise Scott, is an incurable motor maniac with a perpetual spark in her muffler. Others are concerned in the plot, but they do not bear heavily upon its main interest—except *Wizzy*, the *Jessups'* child, whose education fund is at the bottom of all the trouble. Master Thomas R. Tabin, Jr., makes *Wizzy* an interesting little fellow and a pathetic victim of parental thoughtlessness.

THE HIPPODROME which has its own way of accomplishing the seemingly impossible, has set a new standard even for itself this year in its great spectacle, "Around the World." "I'll put a girdle around about the earth in forty minutes," boasted *Puck* in "A Midsummer Night's Dream." But *Puck* was a fairy. Mr. Arthur Voegtlin, the wizard of paint and canvas at the Hippodrome, is not a fairy, so it takes him somewhat longer. He requires four hours for the "grand tour," but in that short lapse of time he reveals to his audiences wonders undreamed even by the *Phincas Fogg* of Jules Verne's imagination, to say nothing of all the mortal globe-trotters from Nellie Bly to Jagger-Schmidt, and then he adds a sensation of the supernatural by leading them on side trips to fairyland where dryads, elves, and gnomes are surprised at play in cool forest glades, and into the ocean's depths where sprites, nymphs and mermaids dwell in harmony under the rule of Neptune.

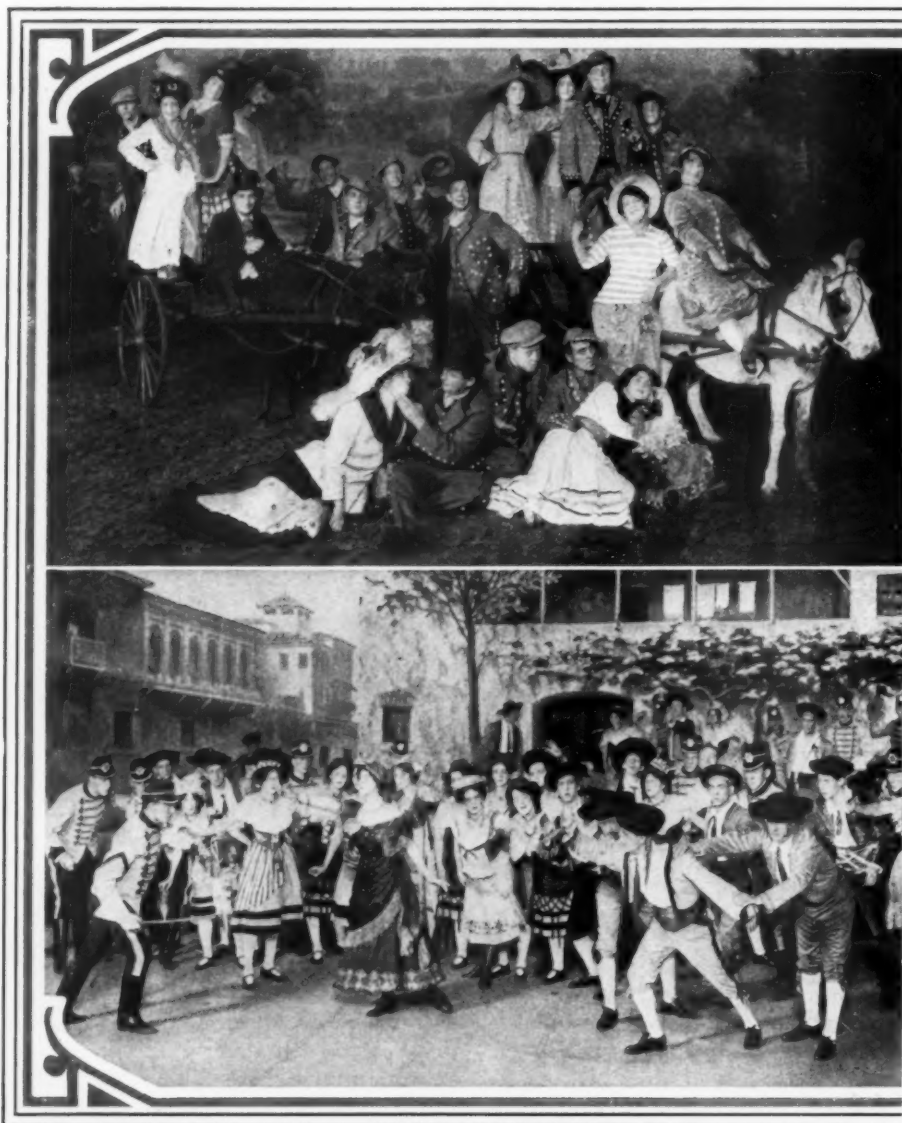
An attempt has been made in this year's production to kindle the imagination rather than merely assault the senses with literal display. The extent to which it has been successful marks a very definite progression for the Hippodrome's big stage. Possibly there is no single scene in "Around the World" quite so impressive as the one a few years ago in which an ocean liner left its pier and put out to sea, but two or three times a great white yacht is seen

tossing in mid-ocean with realism almost incredible. This yacht also serves to carry the plot, for on board it are an American millionaire and his guests who are making the circuit of the earth, and a diamond stolen from an Indian rajah which possesses an evil charm that leads them into hair-raising adventures wherever they go. The plot is the least important thing in the show, so it may as well be forgotten at once.

The tourists set out from a summer place on the Hudson where, to start the wonders, a full-fledged polo game with dashing ponies is shown. You next see the yacht on its voyage and then you find yourselves at a garden party under the battlements of Windsor Castle in England, where hundreds of girls and their coster sweethearts are dancing around May poles and indulging in pastimes dear to the British heart.

The itinerary then leads to the Swiss Alps, and now the mountain scenery becomes gigantic. You see bands of chamois running over the lofty crags and you hear Tyrolean peasants yodeling in the valleys. This rugged picture will impress you, but not so deeply as the next in which you find yourself in Egypt on the edge of the Sahara Desert before the massive, silent Sphinx. Caravans of camels wend their way lazily through the scene and dashing bands of mounted Arabs perform exciting feats of horsemanship. Suddenly the scene darkens and you are treated to all the terrors of a Sahara sandstorm made picturesque by the sight of crouching, frightened camels and sinister by the screeching of the wind and the breaking of palm trees.

Constantinople comes next, and here, in the garden of the Grand Vizier, you look upon the sensual pleasures of the "unspeakable Turk." It may be added that the circus is no longer a detached part of the show. Instead, the feats of the acrobats, tumblers and other performers, more numerous even than formerly, are scattered through the scenes to give characteristic touches to the various episodes. The Nautch Dance at Constantinople has almost the proportions of a ballet, but its gorgeous costuming pales before the splendors of the



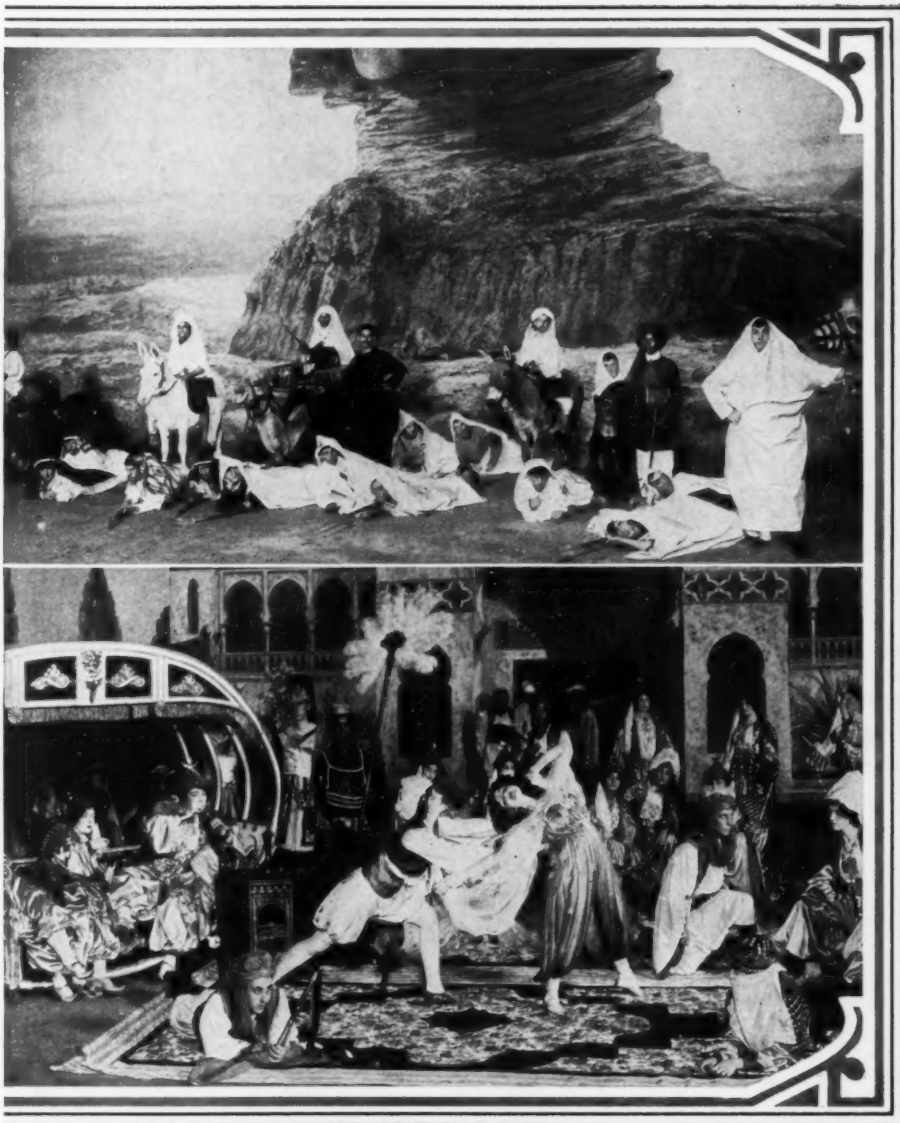
Photograph by Hall, New York

Scenes from the new show "Around the World" at the New York Hippodrome. The upper picture shows the May Day party at Windsor and the lower, the crowd outside the bull-ring at Seville.

Durbar in India, where the tourists next find themselves. The coronation of a powerful rajah is taking place and the natives are gaily celebrating the event. A great temple rises in the background. The space in front of it is thronged with Goorkhas, Sikhs, Parsees, dancing girls, magicians, and soldiery. Through this polyglot multitude moves a procession

of elephants with golden howdahs, horses panoplied in silver, bullocks dragging flower-decked carts, and other animals of the East bearing dignitaries to do homage at the throne of the Prince. I doubt if anywhere in the world a more glittering pageant than this has been set upon a stage.

There is a contrasting, restful quality



Photograph by Hall, New York

Further scenes from "Around the World," the New York Hippodrome's new show. The upper picture shows a caravan resting at the Sphinx and the lower the gardens of the Grand Vizier at Constantinople

to the Italian pictures which follow. Venice, its St. Marks and its canals, are shown in the moonlight and tinkling music floats from the gliding gondolas. Spain then looms into view in its warmer, more picturesque coloring and, at Seville, you experience the excitement of a bull-fight. You dash up to Ireland to get a glimpse of Blarney Castle, and

then you voyage in the yacht to the tropical delights of the Hawaiian Islands.

From this point in the middle of the Pacific the tourists leave the roadways of Mother Earth and wander into the fanciful paths of Fairyland. A dell in a forest is discovered where two hundred gorgeous butterflies are dancing among



the trees on very human feminine legs or flitting through the foliage on shimmering wings. This, of course, is the "Ballet of the Butterflies," the pictorial climax to which the production ascends. There have been thousands of "Butterfly Ballets" in the history of extravaganza, but none so gorgeously beautiful as this lovely display for which the most brilliant rainbow of spring has been caught and denuded of all its colors. And over all is cast the sheen of gold and silver and the glitter of precious gems.

A wonderful transformation is now to come. Warned of impending danger by the *Black Butterfly*, the myriad insects take wing and flit away as the forest suddenly catches fire. Tongues of flame enwrap the gaunt trunks and lick through the lacelike foliage with wonderfully contrived illusion, and then is shown, in another picture, the desolation that has been wrought. Nothing remains but a waste of blackened, smoking embers.

The Hippodrome's big tank is in requisition, as usual, in the final tableau. At its rim a cliff rises to the height of the proscenium. It becomes illuminated and turns slowly into a great waterfall while a Golden Barge, with a crew of fauns, satyrs and gnomes, rises out of the depths of the pool.

There is much less dialogue in "Around the World" than in previous productions at the Hippodrome, which probably does not please Mr. Carroll Fleming, the author. There are also fewer solos, although Mr. Manuel Klein has composed pretty melodies for the ballets and other music that fits characteristically into the various scenes. Best of all, not a shot is fired, or is an explosion heard throughout the entire spectacle, which will please the Hippodrome's hoard of juvenile patrons who in past years have gravitated between amazed rapture and abject terror.

The task of inventing these productions at the Hippodrome becomes more formidable each season. "Around the World," as everyone who sees it must admit, is the result of the happiest of inspirations.

EVERY theatrical season has its idiosyncrasy. The obsession of this one seems to lie in the direction of the female impersonator, who has left his proper field, which is the variety stage, in an attempt to crowd out the leading lady of musical comedy. Two such exhibitions are already on view in Mr. Bothwell Browne who heads the ballet in a musical entertainment, entitled "Miss Jack," and Mr. Julian Eltinge who pirouettes in low-necked gowns in "The Fascinating Widow."

Between these two pieces, the taste of which may be seriously questioned by most people, there is not much room for choice as each deals with the adventures in a young ladies' boarding-school of a man masquerading as a woman, the first as one of the school girls, the second as a more elderly person. The device is almost as old as female impersonators themselves, notwithstanding that, until after Shakespeare's time, men or boys invariably assumed feminine rôles. Both pieces have the common denominator of being commonplace when they are not disagreeably suggestive.

Between the leading performers, however, there is a marked difference. Mr. Eltinge contrives not to let his audience forget that he is, after all, a man, even when he is most actively concerned in simulating the feminine graces. Thus he takes the curse off his exhibition. But Mr. Browne does his best to persuade his audience that boys will sometimes be girls, and therefore presents anything but an edifying spectacle.

These two musical comedies will bring to mind that remarkably clever farce of a decade and a half ago, "Charley's Aunt," principally for the fact that their failure to reproduce its wholesome fun is so marked. As for "The Fascinating Widow," which will have a longer career than "Miss Jack," it must rely entirely for its interest upon the cleverness of Mr. Eltinge. Without him its lines by Mr. Otto Hauerbach and its nondescript jingles would stir nothing but resentment that in this day, when musical-comedy seems to be on the upgrade, such an inexperienced piece could find room on a metropolitan stage.